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ABSTRACT

This report examines the culture of college/university fraternities in order to better understand the relationship between alcohol and fraternity life and to analyse the difficulties in controlling alcohol use and abuse within the collegiate "Greek system." The first chapter describes the serious problem of irresponsible, hazardous use of alcohol on college campuses in general, and particularly by fraternity members. It argues for the use of cultural perspectives as analytical lenses through which to understand the role of alcohol in fraternity life. Chapter 2 summarizes the study of fraternity culture and some of the relevant cultural properties of four fraternities participating in the study. Chapter 3 looks at the socialization practices of fraternities. Chapter 4 interprets the activities, events, and group policies and practices described in chapters 2 and 3 from a cultural view in attempting to determine how these properties work together to create and sustain a strong fraternity culture that exerts considerable influence over its members. Chapter 5 offers conclusions and recommendations for individuals and institutions committed to the type of long-term strategies needed to bring about cultural change in men's fraternities. Consideration is given to tactics that can be employed by national fraternities, colleges, universities, and individual fraternity chapters. Appendices include a history of college fraternities. (Contains 124 references.) (GLR)

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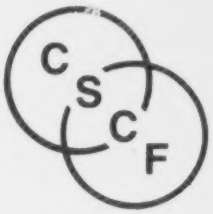

Center for the Study of the College Fraternity

Bloomington, Indiana 47405

BROTHERHOOD AND THE BOTTLE:
A Cultural Analysis of the Role of Alcohol in Fraternities

James C. Arnold
George D. Kuh

Higher Education and the College Fraternity

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BROTHERHOOD AND THE BOTTLE:

A Cultural Analysis of the Role of Alcohol in Fraternities

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October 19, 1992

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Preface

As we write, fraternity membership is at an all-time high: approximately 400,000 men and 250,000 women, about 15% of the white, undergraduate population (Wilkerson, 1989), belong to Greek-letter organizations. With this renewed popularity of fraternities comes heightened awareness of some of their shortcomings. Hazing, racial insensitivity, criminal misbehavior, and alcohol abuse are common criticisms. Approximately 40 students died in fraternity hazing incidents during the 1980s. Of the 110 gang rapes on college campuses in a recent seven year period, 80% reportedly occurred at fraternity functions (Ehrhart & Sandler, 1992). The University of Iowa suspended a fraternity after its members repeatedly violated university and fraternity policies; in one incident, members set a couch on fire and then harassed firefighters attempting to put out the blaze. Because of the seriousness of these concerns, some institutions (including prestigious colleges such as Amherst, Bucknell, Colby, Franklin and Marshall, and Williams) have banned Greek-letter organizations.

In an era when institutions of higher education are attempting to regain the public trust (Bok, 1992), the responses of many Greek-letter organizations to such institutional imperatives as promoting health-enhancing lifestyles and racial and ethnic diversity have been viewed by many in the academy as inadequate. At the same time, some have argued that it is unfair to paint all fraternities with the brush of irresponsibility. Fraternities and sororities, they claim, are only as good or bad as their colleges or universities allow them to be. Serious problems such as alcohol abuse, they also point out, are not limited to Greek-letter organizations. Such behavior by Greeks simply mirrors the campus and society at large.

Purpose

This monograph presents the results of a study conducted during the 1991-92 academic year to better understand the role of alcohol in fraternities. Our approach differed from most other studies of fraternities and alcohol consumption in that we eschewed the types of questionnaires

and surveys that focus on frequency of alcohol use and characteristics of users. Instead we used cultural perspectives to discover the relationship between alcohol and fraternity life and employed ethnographic methods that were more likely to help us understand why alcohol use seemed to be so widespread and difficult to control in fraternities.

To accomplish the purpose of this study, we focused on the shadow side of fraternity culture, the "hidden underbelly" of Greek life as one of our colleagues calls it. As a result, this monograph does not provide a balanced, complete picture of life in a fraternity house. Rather, it is a careful, systematic description of a slice of fraternity life, that portion associated with alcohol.

Organization of the Monograph

In Chapter 1, we describe the serious problem of irresponsible, hazardous use of alcohol on college campuses in general and by fraternity members in particular. Then, we argue for the use of cultural perspectives as analytical lenses through which to understand the role of alcohol in fraternity life. Chapter 2 summarizes our study of fraternity culture and some of the relevant cultural properties of the four fraternities that participated in the study. As with other groups that demand a high degree of conformity and cooperation from their members to remain viable (e.g., military units, athletic teams), fraternities devote considerable time, energy, and resources to teaching their new members how to think and what to do. For this reason, Chapter 3 looks at the socialization practices of these groups.

Chapter 4 interprets the activities, events, and group policies and practices described in Chapters 2 and 3 from a cultural view with an eye toward understanding how these properties work together to create and sustain a strong fraternity culture that exerts considerable influence over its members. In Chapter 5 we offer our conclusions and recommendations for individuals and institutions committed to the type of long-term strategies needed to bring about cultural change in men's fraternities. Consideration is given to tactics that can be employed by national fraternities, colleges and

universities, and individual chapter houses. Indeed, as we shall see, it is the last level of intervention--the individual chapter house--which is the key if efforts to modify fraternity cultures are to be successful and fraternities are to achieve the noble goals to which they aspire.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the executive board of The Center for the Study of the College Fraternity at Indiana University for endorsing this project and for publishing and disseminating our findings in this monograph. The Maris and Mary Higgins Proffitt Endowment of the Indiana University School of Education provided a grant which underwrote the expenses associated with the fieldwork portion of the study. Joyce Regester was her usual good-natured, efficient self in producing various sections of this report from scribbled notes and badly dictated audio tapes. Finally, we wish to thank the two institutions and, in particular, the four fraternities that allowed us to study them "up close and personal." Without their splendid cooperation this study could not have been possible.

We anticipate that some people with ties to the fraternity world will disagree with certain of our observations, interpretations, and conclusions. That's OK. More difficult for us to accept would be tacit acknowledgement of our work without the discussion and critical debate needed to stimulate the kind of reform the Greek system needs to be a productive educational force on the college campus in the next decade and beyond.

James C. Arnold
George D. Kuh
Bloomington, Indiana
September, 1992

Chapter 1

Alcohol, College Students, and Fraternities

The Chippewa River divides the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire campus. Affixed to each side of the footbridge spanning the river are plaques on which the following is inscribed:

> The Chippewa River is both beautiful and treacherous. It has taken the lives of a number of students who attempted to swim across it. Its deceiving nature and the involvement of alcohol have proven to be a deadly combination. Don't make the same mistake.
>
> Concerned Students, Faculty and Staff

This university is not alone in its concern for the health and safety of students and the responsible use of alcohol. And with good reason. As a group, college students drink more frequently and consume more per drinking episode than any other single population group in the country. Perhaps more than three-quarters drink regularly (Kuh, 1991). According to a recent study of 34 colleges in New England, the proportion of men who said they drank to become inebriated doubled between 1977 and 1989, from 20 to 40 percent (Wechsler & Issac, 1992). During the same period, the proportion of women who drank to get drunk tripled, from 10 percent to about 30 percent. About two fifths of both men (41%) and women (37%) reported that they drink to an inebriated state at least three times a month.

National studies have documented the negative consequences associated with college student drinking, such as absenteeism from classes, poor grades, physical altercations, property damage, automobile injuries, fatalities, and reduced productivity (Engs & Hanson, 1988; Gonzalez & Broughton, 1986). At a university in the northeast, 75% of campus police arrests, 80% of residence hall damages, 85% of sexual assaults, 70% of discipline referrals, and 50% of suicide attempts between 1987 and 1990 were alcohol related (L. Upcraft, personal communication, September 11, 1990). No wonder more than two-thirds of college presidents recently indicated that substance abuse, primarily alcohol, topped their list of

concerns regarding the quality of campus life (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1990).

A number of initiatives have been undertaken in an effort to eliminate hazardous use of alcohol, including legislation (e.g., PL 101-226, Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989), additional campus-based substance abuse programs, and more rigorous enforcement of campus policies and civil laws. Yet the drinking behavior of college students has not changed for the better. In part, the inability to appreciably reduce hazardous use of alcohol by college students is due to the fact that many variables influencing alcohol use are difficult to control, such as student's family history with alcohol (Perkins & Berkowitz, 1991). Another factor is the widespread perception that nothing can be done to solve the problem. The following excerpt from an editorial in the Champaign (IL) *News Gazette* illustrates this point of view:

> Underage drinking is a vexing problem with occasionally tragic overtones. But the [city] council seems to be operating under the assumption that there is some magic formula that will eliminate this problem. That is simply wishful thinking. Young people have been drinking for decades and, no doubt, will continue to do so . . . There are other more important issues to be dealt with. The city would be better served by proposing solutions to problems that can be solved.

While drinking among college students is, at the least, an intractable nuisance, alcohol use by certain subgroups of students all-too-frequently becomes life-threatening. As a case in point, consider the February 7, 1992, *Indiana Daily Student* headline: "**Alcohol Almost Takes Pledge's Life.**" In this and subsequent articles, it was revealed that during a "Dad's Night" activity at the Alpha Tau Omega (ATO) fraternity at Indiana University (IU), pledges drank large quantities of hard liquor, wine, and beer. At least one person, a 20-year old sophomore pledge, passed out. When he was finally taken to the hospital he was in a coma; his blood alcohol content (BAC) was 0.48%, usually a fatal level of intoxication. Fortunately, this pledge survived. Unfortunately, such destructive behavior, particularly

among members of white men's fraternities, receives considerable media attention and, as a result, perpetuates negative stereotypes of Greek life.

Granted, such incidents do not occur in a vacuum as a national fraternity executive pointed out:

> The whole thing needs to be put in the context of alcohol abuse being the number one problem on college campuses nationwide. Whether they've got Greek letters on the t-shirt or live in a dorm or apartment, alcohol is America's number one college problem (Hinnefeld, 1992, p. A8).

Nevertheless, the fact remains that the heaviest, most frequent, and most problematic drinking in college is done by fraternity members (Faulkner, Alcorn & Gavin, 1989; Globetti, Stem, Marasco & Haworth-Hoeppner, 1988; Goodwin, 1990; Hendren, 1988; Kraft, 1985; Mills, Pfaffenberger & McCarty, 1981; Miser, 1981; Tampke, 1990). This is the case despite strongly worded policy directives issued by national fraternity executives, information about risk management from house corporations, and lectures about personal and group responsibility by university officials and chapter advisors.

Certainly, fraternities are not totally dominated by hazardous of alcohol, a point to which we will return in Chapter 5. Yet, it is clear that many fraternities fall far short of their own expectations with regard to health-enhancing behavior. The charters of most national organizations are based on values consonant with those expressed by the National Interfraternity Conference Decalogue:

> The college fraternity stands for excellence in scholarship [and] accepts its role in the moral and spiritual development of the individual. Recognizing the importance of physical well-being, the college fraternity aims for a sound mind and a sound body.

With the possible exception of athletic teams, fraternities are the most selective groups on a college campus with regard to membership. Therefore, it seems that fraternities should be able to regulate member behavior by choosing people that are committed to the group's goals and purposes. But the converse seems to be practiced in many instances; that

is, fraternities attract members who use alcohol to excess. An alternative explanation is that the group's enacted purposes (i.e., those values and goals reflected in members' behavior such as occasionally hazardous use of alcohol) differ from the purposes espoused by the group (e.g., the noble aspirations contained in the above statement by the National Interfraternity Conference Decalogue). The differences between what a group says it believes and what its members actually do can be viewed as a product of the group's culture.

Through A Glass Dimly . . .: Culture, Fraternities, and Alcohol

Higher education scholars have used cultural perspectives to examine a variety of issues and interests related to college life. For example, Chaffee and Tierney (1988) described the cultures of institutions that had faced institutional crises, Austin, Rice and Splete (1990) examined how small colleges were able to renew themselves, and Kuh et al. (1991) discovered the characteristics of colleges that promote student learning outside the classroom. Others have used cultural lenses to understand how medical students make sense of the faculty expectations and succeed in medical school (Becker et al., 1961), the primary role orientations toward college of different groups of students (Clark & Trow, 1966), characteristics of contemporary dorm life (Moffatt, 1989), and ritualistic behavior in fraternities (Leemon, 1972).

Purpose

Cultural phenomena constitute a powerful set of stimuli typically underemphasized in efforts to reduce hazardous use of alcohol on the college campus. We agree with Heath's (1987, p. 18) observation "that a long-term strength of anthropological studies have been that they have paid attention . . .to alcohol as artifact and to the complex of attitudes, values, and actions that are associated with it." Indeed, some believe that the most promising avenue to influencing college student drinking is cultural change (Roberts, in press). According to Moos (1976), if a group can create and sustain a culture which reinforces health enhancing attitudes and behaviors, students

will adopt those attitudes and behave accordingly. Therefore, a potentially illuminating approach to understanding alcohol use by fraternity members is to examine the cultural context in which they use alcohol, including patterns of norms, practices, values, and assumptions that guide their behavior as a group (Kuh & Whitt, 1988) and whether certain properties of fraternity cultures sanction--even encourage--the use of alcohol, occasionally to excessive degrees.

Before one can attempt to purposefully shape culture, though, one must first discover and understand the culture (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). That is, to systematically address cultural aspects of fraternities that promote hazardous use of alcohol, properties of fraternity culture (e.g., artifacts, values, beliefs, assumptions) must be examined to determine how they encourage or discourage hazardous use of alcohol. Historically, some fraternities have institutionalized recreational use of alcohol through ritualistic consumption symbolized by group drinking songs and personalized mugs hung in party rooms. It seems reasonable to assume that these and other cultural properties of contemporary fraternities exert considerable influence on the behavior of their members, such as whether they use alcohol responsibly (Kuh, 1991), or, conversely, engage in hazardous use of alcohol.

The purpose of this monograph is to report the findings of a year-long study of cultural influences on alcohol use of fraternity members. That is, we wanted to discover the "language, concepts, categories, practices, rules, beliefs, and so forth" (Van Maanen, 1988, p. 13) of four men's fraternities, particularly as these cultural properties influence members' use of alcohol. Two research questions guided the study: (a) What cultural properties of fraternities seem to be related to alcohol use by their members?, and (b) What was the role of alcohol in the life of their group as perceived by fraternity members?

Cultural Perspectives

Whitt (1988, p. 12) defined culture in organizations as "understandings which enable alignment of actions (Van Maanen, 1984),

mechanisms developed within an organization to cope with a particular problematic environment (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), and 'a mosaic of organizational realities' (Morgan, 1986, p. 127) representing shared meanings, understandings, and sensemaking processes." Hundreds of definitions of the word "culture" exist (Peterson, Cameron, Mets, Jones & Ettington, 1986). Scholars in various fields studying culture (e.g., anthropology, sociology, communication theory) emphasize different aspects of culture and use different terms to communicate their ideas (Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984).

In this study, culture will be viewed as:

> a process of reality construction that allows people to see and understand particular events, actions, objects, utterances, or situations in distinctive ways. These patterns of understanding also provide a basis for making one's own behavior sensible and meaningful. . . [Culture is] an active, living phenomenon through which people create and recreate the world in which they live (Morgan, 1986, pp. 128, 131).

Fraternities as Student Subcultures

Neither the culture of a college nor the culture of its student body are monolithic. Large universities can support many student subcultures; even at relatively small colleges, two or more undergraduate subcultures typically exist (Kuh, 1990).

Subcultures form as students find others with similar interests who live down the residence hall corridor, sit across the aisle in class, or meet at fraternity rush functions. When a group is somewhat isolated from external influences, the continuous interaction among group members produces shared understandings about important values (Hughes, Becker & Geer, 1962) (e.g., what and how to learn), aspirations and goals (e.g., career plans), and appropriate social interaction (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). By adopting the attitudes and values of their subculture, students develop "consistent patterns of response" (Hughes, Becker & Geer, 1962, p. 529) which enable them to interact easily with peers and adjust to the institution's social structure.

As a subculture, fraternities offer their members support and guidelines students for coping with the challenges of college life (Bolton & Kammeyer, 1972; Hughes, Becker & Geer, 1962; Kuh & Whitt). Fraternity members, particularly those who live in the chapter house, have frequent contact with one another, and develop strong loyalty to the group which makes them more susceptible to group influence. Thus, fraternity members share definitions of right and wrong that are used as standards for judging actions. Also, they have no difficulty distinguishing between themselves and nonmembers. As a result, the group essentially determines the amount of time and effort devoted to academics and extracurricular activities, the proper relationship between students, faculty, and administrators, and social behavior (Bushnell, 1962; Hughes, Becker & Geer, 1962; Kuh & Whitt, 1988).

Student subcultures including fraternities sustain themselves through ceremonies and rituals (e.g., initiation of pledges) and formal and informal mechanisms of social control (e.g., grade point requirements for membership, unwritten dress codes) (Bushnell, 1962; Leemon, 1972; Newcomb, 1962). Formal and informal socialization processes also are important to preserving strong and cohesive student subcultures (Leemon, 1972), a point which is illustrated in Chapters 2 and 3. As they conduct their daily business, most Greek-letter organizations develop procedures for dealing with external influences such as university rules and policies and directives from national headquarters. As a consequence, "all of their processes, from recruitment through socialization to elimination, are performed with an eye to their cultural surroundings" (Scott, 1965, p. 90).

Levels of Culture

As with other organizations, the culture of a fraternity can divided into three interrelated levels and meanings--from those visible to the trained eye of a cultural researcher to those hidden from view. These levels are: (a) artifacts, (b) strategic values and perspectives; and (c) assumptions and beliefs.

Artifacts are the most visible level of a culture, "its constructed physical and social environment" (Schein, 1985, p. 14), manifested in interactions, patterns, language, conversational themes and images, daily and periodic rituals, behaviors rewarded and punished, ceremonies, symbols, formal and informal rules and procedures and artifacts (Morgan, 1986; Van Maanen, 1984). Thus, the artifactual level of culture includes "the physical layout, the dress code, the manner in which people address each other, the smell and feel of the place, its emotional intensity, and other phenomena" (Schein, 1990, p. 111).

Physical artifacts of a fraternity include Greek letters, a coat of arms, and the built environment of the fraternity house itself (e.g., the amount of space designated for study, parties, recreation, and so on). Verbal artifacts of a group are represented in the written and oral history of the group, and its everyday as well as such formal language as jargon, slang, sayings, slogans, and stories about fraternity heroes and events--some of which are true and some of which evolve into myths and sagas. Behavioral artifacts, such as rituals, affirm important values. Ceremonies denote key transitions while norms, conventions and customs remind members on a daily basis what is and what is not appropriate behavior.

The middle level of meaning is comprised of strategic values and perspectives specific to the group. They take the form of fundamental "oughts" determined by influential members in the past and present (Lundberg, 1990). What do our leaders and alumni want us to become and do? How are we unique or different from other organizations on campus (e.g., other fraternities, academic theme houses, student government, athletic dorms)? What behaviors are necessary and appropriate in order to sustain our group? What policies and practices support what we believe in? In essence, how do we **do** things around here?

"Values will predict much of the behavior that can be observed at the artifactual level" (Schein, 1985, p. 17). The values of an organization are reflected in the sense of "what should be" compared with "what is." Many values are conscious, explicitly articulated, and guide group members in

dealing with new or key situations. Espoused values are reflected in what people say, but not necessarily in what they do (Argyris & Schon, 1978). That is, it is not uncommon to find groups in which espoused values are internally contradictory and incongruent with observed behavior (Schein, 1985). To discover, understand, and appreciate the culture of an organization, one must be able to discern values congruent with observed behavior and also the group's underlying assumptions and beliefs.

These underlying assumptions and beliefs, the core of an organization's culture, are organization-specific and constitute the fraternity's character (Kuh, in press a) because, taken together, they constitute a world view shared by the members of the group (Lundberg, 1990). These core assumptions and beliefs define the basic elements of group existence--the nature of human relationships, the nature of truth, the nature of human activity, and whether certain classes of people warrant preferential treatment. Assumptions are so basic to existence, so taken-for-granted, and so strongly held by group members that individual behavior based on any other premise is practically inconceivable (Schein, 1985). Assumptions, in this sense, have become, or are, organizational "reality," the product of the shared "reality construction" (Morgan, 1986, p. 128), and are consistent with the concept of "theories in use" (Argyris, 1976; Argyris & Schon, 1974), the "implicit assumptions that actually guide behavior, that tell group members how to perceive, think about, and feel things" (Schein, 1985, p. 18). As such, they tend to be "nonconfrontable and nondebatable" (Schein, 1985, p. 18). To discover the assumptions of a fraternity, we must infer them from other, more visible manifestations of the group's culture.

As a sensemaking lens, cultural research attempts to learn how behavior is influenced by phenomena that are essentially tacit, and exist below the surface of consciousness. Therefore, to discover and understand an organization's culture, one takes note of the visible artifacts of a fraternity, though not knowing what they really mean. Then, through continued contact with the group, the investigator attempts to learn about

the groups' values--both espoused and enacted--and note any inconsistencies between what is claimed and what is actually done. Finally, by establishing trust during a period of prolonged contact, and with the group's help, it is possible for the researcher to begin to discover the organization's underlying assumptions, the core of its culture (Schein, 1990).

From this brief overview of cultural properties, it seems that the culture of a fraternity has six characteristics to which those working with these groups must be sensitive: (a) a common frame of reference for interpreting behavior which is taken for granted by a significant portion of members; (b) socially learned rules that govern group life; (c) a shared way of viewing and talking about the unique aspects of the group's identity; (d) a social structure which is aware of its history and is fairly stable; (e) visible symbols of group values and aspirations manifested in behavior and language; and (f) a tacit set of guiding beliefs and assumptions (Lundberg, 1990). It is also likely that, as with other organizations that develop strong, cohesive, integrated cultures over time, a fraternity's culture is difficult to intentionally change (Kuh & Whitt, 1988).

Culture is a holistic, complex set of properties that influence the behavior of people. At the same time that the cultures of the group and the institution are influencing people, people are shaping the culture(s) in which they are ensconced. So culture can be thought of a system of reciprocal interactions among people, the physical manifestations of the setting(s) frequented by the group, and symbolic meanings unique to the group. In order to understand the cultural influences of fraternities on alcohol use, we had to discover as much as possible about all aspects of fraternity culture as well as external influences on fraternity life. Therefore, while we focused on the relationship between fraternity culture and alcohol use--particularly hazardous use of alcohol--we also examined how related aspects of fraternity life, such as the selection and assimilation of new members to the group (socialization), influenced a broad spectrum of behavior including use of alcohol.

In the next chapter, our study of fraternity culture is described and some of the relevant cultural properties of the four fraternities that participated in the study are summarized.

Chapter 2

A Study of Fraternity Culture: A Summary of Methods and Findings

In this chapter, the methods employed to discover aspects of fraternity culture associated with alcohol use are summarized. Also, selected characteristics of the two host institutions and four men's fraternities participating in the study are described. Appendix A provides a more detailed discussion of the methods.

Selecting the Institutions and the Fraternities

Obtaining permission from institutions to study fraternities on their campus, and gaining access to specific groups, were key early steps.

The Institutions

Two different types of institutions were intentionally selected for inclusion in the study. Institutional size and control (public, private) are thought to influence institutional philosophy, curriculum, and the quality of student life (Astin, 1977). For logistical reasons, both the institutions which hosted the fraternities are located in the midwest. One is a large, state-supported research university, the other is a small, private liberal arts college.

The State-Supported University. At the large institution, about a quarter of the 20,000 undergraduates were affiliated with Greek chapters. According to the student code of conduct at the time of this study, alcoholic beverages were prohibited in university supervised housing, which included all of the fraternity and sorority houses. A formal fraternity rush system existed; however, many organizations did not rely on exclusively on that process to attract members.

The Small, Private College. About three of every four students at the small college were affiliated with a fraternity or sorority. "Responsible alcohol use" was permitted provided certain rules were followed: (1) no common containers such as kegs; (2) availability of alcohol on a "bring your own" basis only; (3) availability of alternative beverages and food; (4) availability of transportation home for participants; (5) alcohol consumption

in compliance with state law (no one under 21 can drink); (6) events attracting 20 or more non-member guests must be registered with the student affairs office and peer-monitored (i.e., visited and observed) by Interfraternity Council (IFC) and Panhellenic representatives; and (7) posted announcements at the house outlining these conditions.

Identifying the Fraternities

In July, 1991, the chief student affairs officer at each institution was contacted to explain the purpose and work scope of the study. Both individuals endorsed the project and assisted the investigators in gaining access to others on the campus whose cooperation was needed. Because we were interested in cultural properties of fraternities that were associated with both responsible and hazardous use of alcohol by members, we asked student life staff familiar with the organizations on their campus to place the groups into two categories, those that had made progress in adhering to the student conduct code concerning alcohol, and those that had not made progress (Appendix A). After this initial discussion with student life staff, the investigators did not share any information about any specific fraternities with institutional agents during the course of the study.

After reviewing additional information (e.g., house grades), the national headquarters of each fraternity we elected to pursue (one so-called "responsible group" and one "no progress group" from each campus) was contacted in early August, 1991. The purposes of the study were explained to the group's executive director. The national office was not asked to formally endorse the study; however, we did want the fraternity's leadership to be aware of the project before learning about it from a third party. In several instances, more information was requested. As with the institutions, cooperation at this level was excellent. All the executive directors offered their support and encouragement. At this point we began contacting groups in order to ascertain their willingness to participate in the study. More about this experience will be presented when describing the respective groups.

Fieldwork in the Fraternities

In order to begin to understand and appreciate the influence of fraternity culture on alcohol use, 66 individuals affiliated with the four fraternities were interviewed during the course of the study, some two or more times. In addition, several campus administrators and other students (e.g., sorority women) were interviewed, for a total of 74 people. The interviews averaged about an hour in length; all were tape recorded with the permission of the participants. Also, formal and informal group events were observed during the course of the 1991-1992 academic year, including a tour of each house by the president. Thus, countless others participated due to their presence at various events and activities that we observed.

Confidentiality was guaranteed to all participating individuals and groups. To protect participants' identity, the descriptions of the groups and institutions are intentionally thin. To further disguise the identities of participants, pseudonyms are used throughout this report to refer to individuals, groups, and institutions; in addition, the names of events and practices also have been altered. When creating alternative labels we attempted to accurately convey the nature and function of the respective activity, event, and organizational value(s).

Initially, a list of questions was developed to elicit responses regarding alcohol use in the fraternities. As the interviews progressed, however, these protocols were used less and less as we became better acquainted with the fraternities and their members, which is to be expected in this type of research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). That is, as our knowledge about and understanding of these groups increased, we were able to focus more specifically on aspects of fraternity culture about which we needed more information.

The nature of the study required that we talk with students about, and observe events at which many of the participants were engaged in, illegal behavior. That is, because most of the participants were under the age of 21, and could not legally obtain or use alcohol, answering our questions and reflecting on life in their fraternity required that they

describe their involvement in unlawful behavior. To protect the investigators from potential legal action and to allay fears about divulging self-incriminating information, participants were required to sign a consent form which indicated that their contributions to the study would remain confidential, that their identity and the identity of their group would not be divulged, that the researchers' notes and other material were protected by a federally-issued **Certificate of Confidentiality,** and that they could withdraw from the study at any time (Appendix A). No one did. Indeed, despite the relatively sensitive nature of certain issues, most participants appeared quite comfortable in discussing their college and fraternity experiences as well as their own and friends' use of alcohol. They simply needed to be encouraged to express their views about these and other pertinent topics.

The Fraternities

In this section we briefly describe the four fraternities that participated in the study. We call them Gamma Gamma Sigma, Pi Omega Beta, Mu Chi Beta, and Delta Alpha Sigma.

Gamma Gamma Sigma. In the late 1970s Gamma Gamma Sigma (GGS) was commonly referred to as "Drugs, Inc." by other students on campus as well as some of its members. Following several years of substance abuse by a substantial proportion of members, the chapter was disbanded. Recolonized in the early 1980s, the chapter has sought since that time to project an image more congruent with a responsible, successful fraternity. Student affairs staff observed that GGS exhibits a "different sort of ethic" compared with the other chapters on campus and confirmed the chapter's self-characterization as a group of "gentlemen."

GGS places a high priority on scholarship; the fall, 1991, semester, it led all fraternities in house grade point average (GPA). In recent years, the group has rarely been involved in disciplinary actions. A concerted effort has been made by members to cooperate with the college administration, to promote positive community relations, and to involve alumni to a significant degree in the life of the fraternity.

Compared with most of the other fraternity houses at this institution, the GGS house is some distance from the central campus. Located in a quiet, tree-lined residential neighborhood, we were told that faculty members living nearby are comfortable in contacting the group directly when a situation, such as a loud party, starts to bother them.

It was difficult, to say the least, to convince GGS to participate in this study. Encountering such resistance from tightly-knit groups is not unusual as they tend to be wary of outsiders. For example, in Whyte's (1981) investigation of a slum area which he called, "Cornerville," the residents of the neighborhood were suspicious that he might be coming in to "criticize our people" (p. 294).

The proposed study was described to members during a chapter meeting on a Sunday evening early in the fall semester. During the question and answer period that followed, members shouted out questions and comments that clearly conveyed their skepticism about the worth of the project and their involvement. A number of vocal members were afraid that a study of this nature would lead simply to more "fraternity bashing" and, therefore, expressed reservations about cooperating. However, after considerable discussion--which included a good deal of listening and assurances that the intent of the study was to **understand**, not prejudge the culture of their group--two thirds of the chapter members subsequently voted to participate in the study.

Pi Omega Beta. Although this chapter is in trouble periodically with the administration, the president of Pi Omega Beta (POB) expressed interest in being involved in this project from the start. As a high school student he had participated in a study of adolescent development conducted by a sociology doctoral student, an experience which he found to be interesting.

Pi Omega Beta is one of those fraternities that "always seems to be in and out of hot water," according to one student affairs staff member. Plagued with chapter leadership problems, its alumni maintain more distance than preferred by campus administrators. Chapter officers change

every semester. Described as a "middle of the road chapter" by student affairs personnel, POB placed in the bottom third in house GPA in the fall, 1991, semester.

According to some, the chapter was "stronger" some years ago, a time--perhaps coincidentally--when the house was physically located near the heart of campus. Twenty years ago, after the original house burned down, the present house was rebuilt further out, along a street with many other Greek houses, and has never regained that "strength." Just two years ago, the house corporation was ready to sell the house. During the spring semester of that year a substantial portion of the house had been virtually destroyed during one week-long campus celebration. At the end of the academic year, many rooms had sustained significant damage, all but two windows in the house had to be replaced, and the yard had to be re-landscaped. Understandably, some members were worried that the chapter might fold. This not-so-idle threat to sell the house and disband the chapter apparently got the members' attention.

During the last two years, the four chapter presidents have made it a priority to cultivate more responsibility among their brothers in place of what had become normative destructive behavior. Some members used the terms "old house" and "new house" to describe this radical shift in behavior--from irresponsible and destructive to more respectful toward house and personal property.

Mu Chi Beta. Mu Chi Beta (MCB) initially declined to participate in this study. It is relatively secretive as far as Greek organizations go and the president was reluctant to commit the group to such a potentially risky endeavor. Student affairs staff subsequently contacted the chapter president and assured him of the legitimacy of the project and the legitimacy of the researchers. This gesture opened the door to further negotiations regarding the group's participation. However, the president ultimately made the decision to involve the group without consulting the rest of the chapter. Therefore, the presentation made to the chapter meeting to formally solicit the group's approval merely outlined the study,

and not to request chapter approval. This led to a certain awkwardness in the early interviews with members because they were directed to participate by chapter officers but had not themselves participated in the decision to be involved in this study.

The Mu Chi Beta chapter house is located between two academic structures on campus, on a main thoroughfare not far from some commercial buildings. Virtually all of the members of MCB underscored the importance of scholarship, brotherhood, and involvement in campus activities and intramurals. They emphasized the word, "success," when talking about activities and events associated with their house and with personal aspirations. For the fall, 1991, semester, the house GPA led all men's fraternities.

During the first visit to the Mu Chi Beta chapter to explain the purposes of this study to chapter members, the president provided a quick tour of the house, pointing out--with obvious pride--where the group kept its kegs and describing the methods it has developed to escape detection by "the Dean." Members readily admit, however, that the chances for being surprised by a visit from an administrator are quite remote due to their good standing with the administration.

Delta Alpha Sigma. Campus administrators observed that while Delta Alpha Sigma (DAS) is "a friendly bunch of guys," the house was a "disaster waiting to happen." The "friendly bunch of guys" description was confirmed on every visit to the DAS house. The initial visit included lunch and then an informal presentation and discussion in the living room to explain the study. At what was a rather abrupt end of a fairly brief and friendly discussion, one member said "So, what about it?" The group responded with nearly everyone giving the thumbs up sign and shouting, "Let's do it!" All subsequent visits during the middle of the day included an invitation to lunch as well as to the party that weekend.

In the late 1980s, when the Greek system at this institution began to get serious about self-regulation, DAS apparently was among the last to consent (or in their case, acquiesce) to the ban on common containers. Thus

it is not surprising that administrators are worried about the chapter's demonstrated lack of appreciation for the reasons behind IFC rules and it's disregard for liability concerns.

Unabashedly focused on social life, the chapter traditionally has demonstrated below average performance according to house GPA rankings. For the fall, 1991, semester, however, DAS improved its standing, moving to the median in house GPA for fraternities.

Except for assistance with a $500,000 house renovation, very little positive involvement by alumni was noted by campus administrators. House leadership positions usually change every semester. Physically, the house is located on the same street with other Greek organizations and campus buildings.

Visible Manifestations of Alcohol

The student culture at both institutions declared that weekends start on Thursday. At the university, for example, parties were scheduled almost every week (either at their own house or at another fraternity) and open to members of Greek houses on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. At the small college, going to the bars or hosting a small, informal room party was a popular pastime on Thursday nights, with registered parties routinely scheduled for Friday and Saturday nights.

At both campuses, fraternities were permitted to hold parties which were "closed," that is, only members of certain groups were invited and anyone whose name was not on the guest list was prohibited from entering. However, virtually any female was admitted to any fraternity event regardless of their affiliation (Greek or independent) or whether they were on the guest list; non-member males were refused entry, although "foreign sausage"--a term for uninvited males--was barred entry to parties at other times as well. Because of the rules regulating alcohol use at the small college, members told us that general practice was to have those 21 or older carry the "bring your own" alcohol past door security; the legal drinking age was ignored once students were inside.

For one observed event at the GGS house, door security for a typical "six way" (three fraternities and three sororities) was quite relaxed. Though a guest list did exist at the door, no one, male or female, was denied entry during the time the door was observed. Further, anyone with alcohol was admitted.

Even though kegs are a violation of campus and national policy, DAS regularly has kegs at the house (for example, early in the evening, for the brothers, before the scheduled party start time). Kegs, however, are not present during the times parties are registered with student affairs.

During a Thursday night "four way," a former Pi Omega Beta president told us how late this particular event would last: "It's always the same--the party lasts as long as the beer does" (reportedly 112 cases of cans on this particular night). "We get the beer, the girls come, the guys come, the beer runs out, the girls move on and then so do the guys. Every one of these is identical."

According to one sorority member:

> I think without alcohol, parties would be non-existent, because I've been at parties where the beer has run out and the party just emptied, you know, like that! Or they say it's going to be like a dry party, and no one goes, you know?

> You hear [all about the drinking escapades] when you go to class on Monday morning. You'll be sitting, minding your own business and overhear a conversation--I remember many times I'd go to class--between two people about how drunk they got on Friday night. You're bound the hear that conversation anywhere you go.

The Fraternity House. To confirm that alcohol plays a prominent role in fraternity life, one need only visit a fraternity house. On one weekday afternoon we spent a few minutes in one of the public areas at one of the houses which, for the most part, was devoid of artifacts representing alcohol--except for a few beer bottle caps left on floor from the night before. But one does not have to hunt for alcohol-related items.

Most of the private rooms in these fraternity houses were occupied by two or three members who individualized their living areas to reflect

their lifestyles and tastes. An inventory of items readily visible from the sofa of a fairly typical Pi Omega Beta room included the following: on the wall to the right was a bar with a television facing the room and a room-size refrigerator behind, two beer pitchers with POB letters hanging from the ceiling, about a dozen shot glasses arranged on a ledge, a model airplane constructed of beer cans hanging from the ceiling, a large, elegantly framed beer sign (this one advertising a light beer), a electric, framed malt liquor sign, and two beer can "huggers" on top of a stereo speaker; on the wall across the room was a framed imported beer sign, another electric beer sign, a poster (ape on a bike) and a print of a framed watercolor; on the wall to the left was a large, unframed poster of a photograph of shelves stocked with a variety of brands of hard liquor and wines, a 15 inch high simulated six-pack of an expensive beer placed on top of a stereo speaker, and an unframed baseball poster; on the wall to the rear was a clock representing a brand of beer, another framed beer sign, an air conditioner, and the outside windows.

A sorority member explains what this suggests to visitors:

> You see a lot of beer-brand posters, with girls on them and things like that. You see a lot of the neon signs, and the mirrors, and then people collect cans, you know like foreign cans or bottles or things like that. Or people have just a bottle of vodka or something just sitting on their dresser. . . I've noticed it dominates. It's definitely a thing that lots of fraternities have. I wouldn't say that sororities have them though. [But] most fraternity rooms have stuff like that, and I think its indicative of the way alcohol is thought of here, something that's a big part of people's lives. . . When I see a sign like that, I don't take notice of it because it's out of the ordinary, or not normal--or not accepted--to have that, because it's advertising drinking, and drinking is something that's done.

Language. Students at both campuses have developed a lexicon distinctive to partying and drinking, and to other attitudes and activities that support hedonistic behavior. Drinking games are not uncommon; for example, 25 to 30 GGS members engage occasionally in "Rowing Man," a ritualistic drinking game which, by all accounts, encourages excessive

drinking. "Beer courage," "liquid courage," "beer goggles," and "beer goggling" all describe a situation where "after eight or nine beers, girls that are rather large tend to look a little thinner . . ."

Often these terms are used in concert with "mash and dash" (as in "hook up with a girl for the night, beer goggling and stuff. . .") and sorority seniors' "mash lists" (a list of fraternity men with whom they have "mashed," posted for all to see at a dinner held in their honor before graduation). Recall the "foreign sausage" term, a shorthand way for identifying men from outside the group that are unwanted competitors in the beer goggling, mash and dash of a house party.

Fraternity members often talk about the "diversity" of their house. But fraternity men have a conception of "diversity" different from that implied by most other groups on a college or university campus. Today, this term commonly denotes tolerance for a wide range of attitudes and the presence of people whose immutable physical characteristics (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability) are different than one's own. Therefore, it was somewhat surprising that members of these four very homogenous groups would use this term to describe themselves.

For our respondents, diversity reflected varying degrees of tolerance with respect to an individual's preferences related to recreation, sports, academic major, tastes in music or clothes, or hair style. "Diversity" to fraternity members also means that their members come from different cities or parts of the country (e.g., a lot of guys from Illinois and roommate from California). A DAS member illustrated what diversity means in the lexicon of the fraternity world:

> There's no mold, nothing we could agree on. We've got guys on the far left, the far right, guys who are incredibly smart, guys who aren't real bright, all different kinds of people from all different kinds of backgrounds. . .[yet] we're all one big cohesive unit of individuals.

A POB member recollected being attracted to his house because of the "diversity" of the members. "[We have] crazy guys, super serious. . .

You come to this place and it's diverse. There's no other place like it, premed, physical education majors. . ."

Most of the respondents in this study, at one time or another, echoed this theme. At Gamma Gamma Sigma, for example, diversity was illustrated by assertions that members respected the individual identities of other members, that there was no predetermined GGS mold to which one had to conform. "We're Johnny Jones first, a GGS second," said one member. As we shall see in the next chapter, this is overstated to say the least.

Nothing in our observations or interviews suggested that "diversity" in these groups included welcoming or embracing people from historically underrepresented racial or ethnic groups. Quite the contrary. Only one of the groups, Gamma Gamma Sigma, had an African-American member. Intolerance was the norm, although overt expressions or acts of racism were studiously avoided. The most obvious example of intolerance was sexist attitudes and behavior. As we shall see later the language, songs, and skits of fraternity men can be characterized by "rips on women." This behavior, as one GGS member put it, is "normal, expected."

When discussing sexual orientation, it immediately became clear that homosexuality was a taboo subject. While many members in these groups spoke of "brotherhood," those willing to talk about this subject were unanimous that should a member "come out," ostracization by their group would be immediate.

And, of course, since this project focused on alcohol use by fraternity members, many individuals stressed that drinking is not an obligation of membership in the group. That is, everyone is allowed to follow their own personal choice regarding whether to drink, or not, and if they do drink, how much. Indeed, all four groups in this study had at least one member who practiced abstinence. Such a person was often pointed to as further evidence of the "diversity" of the organization.

A sorority member interpreted the meaning of free choice concerning alcohol consumption:

> Yeah, people don't have to drink, and no one would. . . like if you don't want to drink, lot of time people will go, 'How come you're not drinking?.' And you'll go, 'I don't feel good' or 'I really don't want to.' But. . .you don't have to, at all. . . But a lot of times if you want to have fun with people who are drinking, you kinda gotta be like the Joneses, and go ahead and do it because. . .you're not going to have fun. Unless you can have fun with drunk people (while you are) sober, which I don't see as being too easy. . If you don't drink, you don't fit in.

While one is free to choose to abstain in the fraternity world, doing so risks alienation from one's peers, at least in terms of not being able to meet them on their own level during party situations. To be included, to "fit in," one finds that abstaining from alcohol is not "too easy." In the words of a former Delta Alpha Sigma social chairman, drinking is "the social thing to do. . . a given. . . College and underage drinking are synonymous."

Even those students who drink very little, or abstain, readily acknowledged that drinking is "a given" among their peers and that the presence of alcohol is a normal, expected part of collegiate life. One student, encountered at a GGS party, said:

> When you think about going to college, you don't think about professors and books. You think about being away from home, the people you're going to meet and the parties, and the social life and the drinking. That's what you're really thinking about.

So while fraternity members espouse the value of freedom of choice with respect to alcohol use, the reality is that most everyone chooses to drink. As we shall see, those who would like to avoid peer pressure to consume alcohol will be out of luck.

Subverting Institutional and National Fraternity Policy

The fraternities at both campuses traditionally assessed social fees of their members to underwrite the costs of social events, including the purchase of alcoholic beverages. Because of liability and risk management concerns, the policies of most national fraternities prohibit use of house funds to purchase alcohol. Groups that continue to assess their members a social fee ostensibly use this money to provide entertainment (bands or DJs)

and other party favors. However, the social chair of one group occasionally is reimbursed from this fund for the alcohol he obtains for house use; there is no "trail" to the fraternity that way. Another group keeps a separate set of books for their "informal social fund" which is used to record house social expenditures, including alcohol. The accounting procedures for this separate fund are quite rudimentary but they work. Only a list of names appeared; check marks indicate who has, and has not, paid their social "dues" for the semester. No dollar amounts or other identifying information is entered.

Fraternity members often view administrators as ineffective in dealing with alcohol on the campus. The words of one GGS member summed up the attitudes of many of his brothers concerning the role of institutional agents in regulating alcohol:

> I think it's impossible to outlaw alcohol, to have a dry campus. I don't think that what [college officials are] aiming at, and I think they realize that's just impossible, because when you're at college you're going to have a lot of underage drinking--college and underage drinking are synonymous. So, I don't think they're trying to outlaw that at all. . . To tell you the truth, I don't think they really know what they think they're doing. Taking away kegs is one thing, but that's really not going to solve much if they're trying to stop drinking. I realize the liability issue, but that's totally different. I guess I don't see the administration as trying to outlaw drinking at all. They know it's there. They're trying to minimize it as much as they can, but anything they do is really ineffective, I'd say.
>
> I think next week is Alcohol Awareness Week on campus, which to tell the truth doesn't mean much to me. All the fraternities will hang their signs up out front just to recognize the week. . . I'll probably still drink on the weekend. I guess [the campus is] supposed to sponsor a non-alcoholic party, but to me it's just a waste of time to even have Alcohol Awareness Week on campus. They'll probably be having some speakers talking against [using alcohol] but you know, first of all, not many people know when [the week] is--people aren't going to give a rip.

> I think the university should try to leave the alcohol issue alone, to tell you the truth. They're just going to cause even more problems by not letting us do what we want. . . People will drive other places to do it and that's just another mess right there. I would think anything the university does is ineffective.

Some fraternity men view alcohol policies as a game of sorts in which both administrators and students are willing participants. On occasion, however, administrators violate the rules by "coming down" on a chapter at a particular point in time, apparently to use the group as a negative example from which the others are to learn something. The lesson to be learned is, "don't get caught." Those chapters that engage in playing the game according to the administrators rules are more successful in insulating themselves from visits by the dean at awkward times and being disciplined for alcohol-related infractions.

A former president of POB was among our more demonstrative respondents about the relationship between fraternity chapters and campus administrators. He talked about the "double standard" on his campus concerning alcohol:

> . . .two totally conflicting, double-standard hypocritical things. Pure and simple. They know we have kegs. We know that they know that we have kegs. It's like 'Ah ha, we're gonna play good cop, bad cop with you.' You know it's just silly. They want us to be treated as adults, but then they don't. And then when we don't deserve to be treated like adults, we are! It makes no sense to me. . . A lot of that has to do with (a former administrator) who was totally inaccessible. You couldn't get [that person] on the phone--ever. [The replacement] is great . . . But when you think of [administrators], you think of the Evil Empire from Star Wars--they're going to come down, that's all they're designed to do is crack down on you, which shouldn't be their job. Nobody looks to them for help, which is part of their job. Nobody does. Because to get them involved in something is going to put you into so much red tape and put your ass in a sling that there's no point. No point at all. . .

Asked to elaborate on the "double standard," he said:

> They have a very good idea what's going on and I'm sure they even know where we hide our kegs. They know all that shit. But when they pick a house as they see as being out of line and make them an example for a year. . . The easiest way to avoid [being busted] is to play the game. . . And we're getting very good at it now. That's all it is, a big game. . . You have people that are campus leaders, show that your scholarship is improving, you do this, you do that, you kiss ass! That's all you have to do, is kiss ass and go, 'See, look, we're good people: we do this, we do that, we have IFC Vice Presidents, we have people on [this committee and that board], we have people doing this, we have people doing that. See how great we are?' And they're like, 'Oh boy, you guys are model citizens!' It's like wink, wink, nudge, nudge . . . Who the hell are you kidding here? You just laugh about it because then you know you've got them so brown-nosed. At least you're playing the way that they wanted [the game] played, [which is playing to a] public image, and that's all that they're looking for usually. As long as you don't appear out of control. . then you're not going to have much of a problem. We've improved our campus image over 400%, I would say, over what it was two or three years ago. . . That's just it. It's silly. That's the way life is to a large degree. . .

Another POB member agrees that survival for chapters in the Greek system revolves around "politics, you know. That's what it is around here. It's just politics." Punishments are meted out to chapters depending on their perceived "status" in administrators eyes.

> For example, if (chapter name) wins (event name), they have a bash that night. The dean isn't going to come by! The dean knows that the beer is going to be flowing in the house, all over the place, and he won't come by. Winning the (event) is huge status on this campus. . . it's a big deal, it's a huge deal.

What must a house do to be insulated from untimely visits by the dean? "Philanthropy, doing a lot of philanthropy, grades, house GPA on campus, intramurals, everything like that. . .staying out of trouble."

Practices With the Potential To Discourage Drinking

Most of what we observed or were told seemed to endorse or encourage drinking. However, several common practices (the first of which qualifies as hazing) may discourage excessive drinking. A "markered"

fraternity member was one who passed out before making it to his own room or bed after an night of drinking only to awaken the next day with a variety of uncomplimentary, embarrassing phrases written in magic marker all over his body. The front of a t-shirt popular on one of the campuses declared: "Just Say No;" on the back it says: "Friends Don't Let Other Friends Beer Goggle."

The Need for a Closer Look

From the preceding discussion, it is clear that campus cultures and fraternity cultures tolerate a range of attitudes and behaviors regarding alcohol use. Expectations for responsible alcohol use vary somewhat from group to group and from individual member to individual member. Regardless of how their espoused values (academic, social) are prioritized, all the groups in this study--through the physical environments of their house, language, and rewards and sanctions--made it clear to their new members that alcohol and alcohol use are part and parcel of their group.

Because learning how to be a "fraternity man" is key to understanding the role of alcohol (and, of course, other behaviors), we needed to learn more about how these early experiences with the group influenced the behavior of new members. To that end, in the next chapter we examine more closely the role of rush and pledgeship in socializing newcomers.

Chapter 3

Fraternity Socialization: An Up Close and Personal Look at the People-Processing Phenomenon in Greek Life

> You'll be subjected to hazing all your life. When you hold important offices in the future, burghers, peasants, nobles and your wives will harass you with various vexations. When this happens don't go to pieces. Bear your cross with equanimity and your troubles without murmuring. . . (Martin Luther, cited in Nuwer, 1990, p. 118)

Socialization is the process by which an organizational culture reproduces itself. Van Maanen (1984, p. 215) summarizes the elements of socialization as "such matters as expectations, values, skill development, and normative (moral) judgments about the kind of abilities and performances a person thinks likely to be applicable and rewarded" in the organization a novice is about to enter. Anticipatory socialization is the process by which newcomers discern the values, attitudes, norms, knowledge, and skills needed to function in a satisfactory manner in a new role or environment **prior to actually entering the setting** (Bragg, 1976; Merton, 1957). As we shall see, the four fraternities used a variety of socialization practices that, among other things, encourage drinking, often to hazardous levels of consumption.

First we use examples from all four groups to provide an overview of the nature of rush and pledgeship. Then, a case study of one group is used to demonstrate how newcomers learn about their group's culture--its values, expectations, and desired behaviors.

Rush and Pledgeship

Rush and pledgeship are the major vehicles by which newcomers are introduced to fraternity life. Although alcohol use during rush and pledgeship are clear violations of civil law and campus policy, as we shall see alcohol was frequently featured during these times. Therefore, to understand the cultural influences of alcohol in these groups, we had to

discover--or try to discover--what it means to be member of the group, and, especially, the process by which one becomes a full member of the group.

Rush

Rush is the process whereby the fraternity first identifies its "rushees," individuals that appear to be worthy of consideration for membership. From this group, the fraternity then chooses a select few individuals who receive a "bid," which is a written invitation to join the group. The bid is subsequently signed by the rushee to signify acceptance of the invitation to join, whereupon he is known as a "pledge." Following the invitation and acceptance is "pledgeship," a weeks-long, rigorous experience which the pledges must endure. Completion of pledgeship signifies the pledge's readiness for, and worthiness of, full membership in the group.

The activities that make up the rush process understandably vary somewhat from group to group. At the small college, however, there seemed to be more consistency across the groups compared with the fraternities at the university. All fraternities at the small college abided by the rules outlining formal, campus-wide deferred rush. Rush was to take place six weeks into the first semester and consisted of a series of "rush sessions," brief, formalized house visitations including speeches, slide shows and conversation (very similar in structure to the process sororities on many campuses typically use). During that initial six-week time period potential rushees are not permitted on fraternity property; reportedly the only permissible communication between a rushee and a fraternity member is during such incidental contact as might occur, say, in a classroom. Some of the rules governing member and rushee behavior during the rush process included prohibitions against house visitation in the weeks prior to rush, alcohol consumption, and even showing pictures or mentioning "kegs" or alcohol during rush events. Stiff penalties have been meted out for violating the alcohol prohibition during rush.

Of course, what actually happens during rush varies depending on the house. Gamma Gamma Sigma's view of the rules governing rush appeared to be fairly strict. By all accounts, alcohol was not used during

rush, nor was the topic mentioned much, if at all. They tended to emphasize academics; when social events were mentioned, it was assumed by members that all houses have social events and so does GGS.

The practice at Delta Alpha Sigma was quite different in that emphasized the social aspects of group life. They typically allotted a significant portion of time during rush presentations to an enthusiastic social chair who talked about his role, responsibilities, and achievements. (During the rush for 1991-1992, whether or not they were overemphasizing social activities was debated by the group.) Nor was it unusual for DAS members to drink before the rushees arrive for the evening, or for the group to tap a keg after the evening's events wound down and all rushees departed.

At Pi Omega Beta, potential rushees, most of whom were high school seniors, were invited to the house during Spring Festival, a week-long event dominated by parties and, typically (campus wide), abusive use of alcohol. POB members say that this is "a convenient time" to meet rushees since everyone is generally around during the events of Spring Festival and parties give them all an opportunity to interact. One member, reflecting on his experience as a prospective rushee at this event--particularly the combination of music, women and alcohol present (not necessarily in that order!)--said that, as a high school senior, he walked into a Spring Festival party at the POB house and said to himself, "This is me!"

Mu Chi Beta members repeatedly asserted that their rush is totally dry. Like POB, Mu Chi Beta tended to concentrate on rushing high school seniors, though they took pride in their ability to attract members without using alcohol as a drawing card. Instead, MCB emphasized such aspects of fraternity membership as athletics and academics. MCB rushees visited the house during a spring term weekend when there are no parties scheduled.

As discussed above, the rush processes for two of the chapters above (GGS and MCB) were, for the most part, alcohol-free. Another chapter (DAS) clearly underscored the social aspects of fraternity life rush during

rush, and tolerated alcohol use by members prior to and following rush events. Pi Omega Beta openly used alcohol in its rush.

As mentioned earlier, the messages that the rush and pledgeship processes send to newcomers about the role of alcohol in fraternity life constitute cultural learnings (Van Maanen, 1984). These cultural learnings about alcohol and fraternity acquired by potential rushees can be placed at different points along a continuum, from "prohibited in certain situations" to "permitted (encouraged may not be inaccurate) always." However, once rush officially concluded and the process of pledgeship began, even those groups that fell on the "alcohol prohibited in certain situations" end of the continuum seemed to gravitate toward the "alcohol permitted" end.

Pledgeship

At Gamma Gamma Sigma, bids are offered on a Saturday night. The first GGS pledge activity was a Sunday afternoon activity. Most respondents said that it was at that event where they first consumed alcohol at the house. In the words of one junior: "We pledged on Saturday night, then came over the next day and played football and frisbee and tapped a keg. . . This tended to give a good idea of what to expect. . . (that) drinking was a big part of the social aspect here." A group of first-year students from the most recent pledge class described a similar scenario for the day after pledging.

Sometime in the next two weeks, GGS pledges again are exposed to alcohol at the house when, early one evening, they are directed to play "Name That Pledge." In this game, pledges sit in a circle with actives observing. A pledge starts the game by saying his name and hometown, the next one says the first pledge's name and hometown and his own, and so on. Whenever anyone makes a mistake, they are required to drink. Most participants choose beer from the keg provided for the event; however, an alternative beverage also is present. This activity was described by one member as "a good example of ritualistic drinking in the sense that you do feel peer pressure [to drink]."

Another time when alcohol was present, but consumption not forced according to respondents, was at initiation. Each initiate is given a bottle of champagne that evening and offered shots of Crown Royal. Most initiates downed several shots of the Crown Royal and then attended the house party to which a sorority had been invited. A number of members indicated that, despite the moderation in alcohol consumption encouraged throughout the day and early evening (when parents and other visitors were still around), this was one of their heaviest drinking nights since affiliating with the chapter.

As mentioned, Gamma Gamma Sigma is somewhat less preoccupied with partying compared with Delta Alpha Sigma. Someone can pledge Gamma Gamma Sigma--which has more of an academic focus than the other chapters at their institution--and still be assured that the social aspects of campus life will not be neglected. They explained that this is possible because everyone knows fraternities and parties go together. They say that they drink less, and less frequently, than other Greeks on their campus. Recall the emphasis they place on academics and their assiduous efforts to cultivate a "gentlemanly" image. However, the attitude that partying is "a given" seems to also prevail. One member described his first party at the GGS house as a "real eye opener . . . a monster--I was overwhelmed by what I saw."

The other fraternity claiming to practice dry rush at the time of this study was Mu Chi Beta. Although MCB pledgeship, as with rush, is officially espoused to be dry, the period before classes begin in the fall is characterized by excessive use of alcohol. A former MCB president admitted, "We have plenty of alcohol [during that week]." Mu Chi Beta members, however, unanimously declared that their pledgeship is "dry," explaining that pledges are required to go to the library on most weekend nights when there are parties at the house. Nevertheless, even after that initial first week, there are many reported examples of drinking by pledges, including such officially sanctioned times as the chapter's largest fall semester party, the evening their "Big Brother" is identified, a designated

night they are allowed to party with their pledge class, and the night pledgeship concludes. Pledges consistently reported that all of these events involved considerable, and in many instances, excessive use of alcohol.

Pi Omega Beta pledges do not enjoy party privileges during their pledgeship; however, they learn a lot about what to expect later by providing security for house parties. During a visit to this house for one such event, pledges "working the party" made sure we were "legitimate," and not a representative of the dean. The "Big Brother Night" at POB, quite similar in format to the one just mentioned for MCB, was one of the most vividly described traditions associated with pledgeship. All the groups in this study have some version of this event, all of which featured alcohol. This was the type of event that precipitated the Indiana University ATO pledge's coma mentioned in Chapter 1.

The POB Big Brother Night begins with the usual practice of pledges returning late in the evening from study tables at the library whereupon they are greeted by their pledge trainers. This night, though, the pledges are lined up in a hallway, blindfolded, and subjected to a particularly loud and indicting speech which concentrates on the shortcomings of this particular pledge class. The pledges are led to believe that they have been uniquely negligent as far as their pledge classes are concerned; most pledges report experiencing fear about the consequences of their past behavior. After a prolonged period of being harangued by the trainers, pledges are led downstairs into the dining room. After they are appropriately situated in the room, the pledges are allowed to remove their blindfolds. Most members report being disoriented at this particular moment as they are greeted by their big brothers who have prepared pitchers of a beverage, typically a mixture of beer and hard alcohol. (A former POB president said that this tradition has been changed and the potentially toxic mixture prohibited for safety reasons.) Soon the pledges realize that what appeared to a be disciplinary action was merely contrived, and begin to party with other pledges and their big brothers. Pledges are expected to drink from the pitchers until they vomit, at which time they may cease drinking, if they so

desire. Big Brother Night is a particularly memorable event for POB members, for until this time they have had essentially no status within the house. This event is the first time they report feeling accepted, as if they were "a real part of the house," because they are treated as peers.

Other events that include alcohol during pledgeship, though reportedly not to the extent of Big Brother Night, are: (a) the walkout (to another campus that has a POB chapter); (b) Thunder Night, where pledges challenge actives to wrestling matches; (c) and the evening they are "announced" as having completed pledgeship.

Finally, Delta Alpha Sigma pledges reported having a party at the house the Saturday night that pledging takes place. A sophomore respondent said that most everyone in his pledge class "snuck back to the house" after the conclusion of the evening's official events. This rather spontaneous (and prohibited) party entailed the consumption of three or four kegs. It was "a wild night." Some pledges performed "verticals"--handstands on the keg while drinking through a tube in their mouth--and were timed to see how long they could drink while so positioned. An intramural football game the following day was appropriately dubbed, "The Hangover Bowl." On this same day, after the game, a get-together was hosted at a nearby residence of a local alumnus for a game of "Capture The Keg." The group is divided into two teams; the object of the game is to procure beer from the opposing team's keg. This event bears some similarity to the GGS Sunday afternoon keg which is shared at the chapter house. However, at this DAS off-campus event, pledges are served alcohol provided by the alum who also serves as the chapter advisor. DAS pledges also consume alcohol during their walkout, their Big Brother Night, and at their initiation, much as has been described above for the other groups.

All fraternities and sororities at the small college participated in a series of "petal-ins" during the pledgeship period. In this event, which concludes with alcohol, the actives and pledges of a fraternity visit a sorority house. The actives from both the fraternity and sorority form a "tunnel" on the sidewalk outside the house. Outside the tunnel, the pledges

from both houses form two lines facing each other; a male pledge steps forward, presents a flower to a female pledge, and the couple then walks through the tunnel of actives. The object of this event for the men is, obviously, to meet sorority women, and vice versa. After the "tunnel" ritual, all the participants go to the fraternity house for dinner, typically hamburgers on the grill, where alcohol is invariably available.

Until a few years ago, this event was called "kiss-ins," and included--at a minimum--a peck on the cheek between fraternity and sorority pledges as they moved through the tunnel. However, because at least one sorority woman described the event to institutional agents as sexual harassment, the format was modified to prohibit physical contact (kissing) that was required during "kiss-ins."

Becoming a Member of Iota Nu Sigma: A Case Study

During the course of this study, we became acquainted-- directly and indirectly--with many different groups. One group in particular stood out because of its salient self-image and its capacity to clearly and consistently communicate its norms, values, and expectations to prospective members. Because of its strong culture, the sanctions and rewards meted out by this group to its members were all the more influential in shaping the behavior of newcomers. From now on we refer to this group as Iota Nu Sigma (INS).

The information presented about this group's rush and pledgeship practices is quite revealing. Therefore, it would be irresponsible and unethical for us to describe the group in ways that violates the terms of our confidentiality agreement. However, there are a few things about INS that are important to know.

INS is generally perceived by student affairs staff and members of other fraternities on its campus to produce tightly-knit pledge classes. The house GPA usually compares favorably with other high achieving groups on campus. In addition to Greek life, INS members also tend to actively participate in other aspects of campus life (e.g., intramurals, student government).

As with most fraternal organizations, one does not find himself in the brotherhood of Iota Nu Sigma by accident. The rush and pledgeship processes by which the group and potential members come together are intentionally designed and carefully orchestrated. Pledgeship is not necessarily an easy, or particularly pleasant, experience, as will be illustrated later. The combination of rush and pledgeship, however, insures the complete socialization (acculturation, induction, integration, incorporation) of newcomers. The conclusion of the process is the ceremonial ritual called "initiation," the climax of the entire experience at which point the novice becomes an INS--at long last a "full member" of the group.

Rush

Some other fraternities at this institution recruit pledge classes every semester. However, INS inducts only one pledge class per year, the members of which are recruited primarily from high school seniors. Among those routinely targeted are legacies, a group made up of relatives of former INS actives--sons, brothers, nephews, grandsons, and so on. Any active member or alumnus may nominate one or more high school seniors who they think may be "INS material." One member observed that a number of communities in the region have been particularly fertile territory for "breeding INSs" (producing rushees).

Two active members share the role of INS Rush Chairs. The process over which they preside extends from the time of initial contact with prospective members until the time such individuals are formally issued an invitation to join. Nominees receive a mailing from the Rush Chairs that includes a letter indicating that they have been recommended and a blank Information Sheet. Everyone who fills out and returns the Information Sheet is invited to visit the INS house during one of three weekends in the spring.

Approximately 70% of the pledge class each year is filled using these procedures. A handful of rushees informally visit the house when some members are around during the summer months; a few others are rushed at

the beginning of the fall semester. Though the rush process used at those times has a somewhat different look and feel, it serves the same purpose as the spring Rush Weekends. Because most rushees take part in one of the spring Rush Weekends, a description of this event is warranted.

Rush Weekends. Typically, two weekends in March and one in early April are designated as Rush Weekends. During these weekends the house is focused on welcoming and getting to know the rushees. Seniors in the house participate, but not as actively as freshmen, sophomores, and juniors.

Rushees arrive at the INS chapter house about noon on Saturday and are met by their Rush Host, a member who has recently been initiated, usually a freshman. The Rush Host has been identified previously to the rushee by means of a handwritten letter which the Host is required to send out to the rushee's home address prior to Rush Weekend. After lunch in the house dining room, a group consisting of rushees and members head to the gymnasium for an afternoon of recreational basketball. This activity can last up to about three hours, and not only allows rushees to demonstrate their athletic ability but also to get to know members and each other as a considerable amount of this time is spent in conversation while standing around on the sidelines.

The group then returns to the INS house for a period of unstructured time before dinner, perhaps as much as an hour or two. "We just kinda laid around for awhile," recalled one first-year INS. As with lunch, dinner is taken in the dining room. After dinner is the featured event of the evening, Rush Entertainment, which typically consists of the INS slide show, followed by a number of skits put on by house members.

The slide show "just talks about the house" by presenting typical scenes and activities of the members, such as "a lot of IMs [intramurals], Harvest Festival, stuff like that." On the Saturday of the Rush Weekend described here, the slide show was cancelled because of an important nationally televised basketball doubleheader. Members and rushees all watched the games together on the big screen television in the Maple Room just off the dining area.

While the first game was on, soft drinks and a number of different types of very tasty deep-dish pizza, apparently prepared at the house, were available on a "serve yourself" basis from the dining room tables. True to the INS leaders' description of this weekend, no alcohol was consumed by INS members in the presence of the rushees. However, alcohol was not entirely absent.

For example, Bob, our key respondent in the house, and a former house president and two-time Pledge Educator, was drinking a can of beer and carrying the rest of an unopened six-pack as he walked into the house. During the skits, described below, a sorority member drank from a bottle of beer. We subsequently were told by a former Pledge Educator that it is permissible for members involved in the skits to drink, "so they're not so nervous." In addition, the Rush Entertainment Committee is considered a "select" group for this weekend and "they sort of enjoy having the chance to do that" (i.e., drink). Aside from these few apparently sanctioned deviations from fraternity policy, any member caught drinking during this weekend, especially any member who would offer or even show alcohol to a rushee, is subject to a heavy fine by the house.

During half-time of the first game, one of the Rush Chairs distributed handouts to the 16 rushees present, which contained the previous semester's all-house and pledge class grade point averages for fraternities on campus. The fact that INS placed very high in both was noted as an indication of the importance of academics in this chapter.

The outcome of the first game was never really in doubt. After the final buzzer, all the members huddled in front of the television and joined together in a college fight song. The event seemed to be rehearsed. Up to this point in the evening, members could not be distinguished from rushees; now it became clear who was who. The members were singing by the TV and everyone else was just sort of standing idly around; the room was obviously divided into participants and observers.

After the fight song, there was a shout and everyone went outside on the lawn to celebrate the victory. The fight song was sung again, and many

members shouted and waved to people passing by in cars. A number of others were merely milling around. One member urinated by the side of the house; although his back was turned, his act was in full view of all, including passersbys on the street.

Some members attempted to start basketball game in their parking lot, but were foiled by a car parked directly under the hoop. After some loud debate about what to do, several members attempted to lift and move the car in order to clear the way for the game. Before they had a chance to do this, though, someone threw out the keys from a window so the car could be driven away.

Some of those milling around, of course, included the rushees. One rushee said, more to himself than to anyone in particular, "You've got to know that the rushees don't have a clue about what's going on here." Finally, everyone headed back to the basement of the house for dessert. Ice cream was served by a couple of very attractive young women, perhaps sorority members (though they were not wearing letters). Everybody then sat down to watch the second game of the basketball doubleheader. During the first half of this game, some members went to work setting up the dining room for the evening's entertainment--the skits.

At halftime of the second game, everyone moved into the dining room area for the skits. A makeshift curtain had been hung from pipes that ran across the room, just beneath the ceiling. Many sat in chairs that were placed on top of the dining room tables so that they looked down upon the makeshift stage. It took a good twenty minutes or more for everyone to shuffle in, find a place, and settle down. By this time, a few more sorority women had joined the group, in addition to those who had been serving ice cream. One of these women continued to drink beer; several others left the room on occasion. Finally, the lights were turned out indicating that the show was about to begin.

The skits were billed as "really funny . . . as showing life in the fraternity, kinda poking fun at it." This kind of buildup was mindful of the

genre of entertainment provided at Boy Scout camp: just "good clean all-male fun."

There were about a half a dozen skits in all. Between skits, an active sang and played the guitar. The format for the skits seemed to be adapted from **Saturday Night Live**. The first skit was particularly memorable, not for its humor but for how women were portrayed.

Two members, apparently "fraternity cool guys," were engaged in a conversation about what life in a fraternity is like. One asked the other what happened after the party the other night. The brother's reply: "Hey, I got laid, sucked, and fucked. It's a given!" This kind of dialogue continued throughout the entire skit. Women were referred to as "bitches"; females were usually yelled at using words directing them to perform certain acts. For example, the words, "leave" and "cram" were illustrated in context: "BITCH, **LEAVE** YOUR CLOTHES OVER THERE!"; "BITCH, YOU BETTER **LEAVE**, I CAN HEAR YOUR BOYFRIEND HONKING OUTSIDE."; and "**CRAM** MY DICK INTO HER PUSSY."

Everyone in attendance seemed to think the skit was hilarious. Laughter followed almost every line of dialogue. Although the material is patently sexist, the women appeared to be laughing along with the guys.

The topic of the second skit was "beer goggling," an activity so common that it did not need to be explained to the group. Two fraternity men debated the merits of trying to pick up a woman. The woman's role was played by a member made up to be a very unpleasant looking female. The more they had to drink, the more attractive the woman became until one of the "cool fraternity guys" initiated a conversation and--apparently--successfully matched up with the woman for the evening.

Another skit featured a member, dressed as a biker, advertising the benefits of a new drink for those with physically active lifestyles. This "drink" consisted of live goldfish deposited into a blender containing a little water. After the blender was activated, the biker drank the mixture to the groans of the crowd. He eventually gulped one more goldfish--whole and still alive--to more groans.

Yet another skit was a variation of a theme commonly used in skits at summer camp. The scene is the bathroom in the morning. One by one people file in, all of whom use the same toothbrush and spit into the same cup. The last person brushes his teeth, spits into the cup as have all the others, looks at the cup of liquid, hesitates, and then drinks it--to the very large groans of the audience. One member of the audience seated nearby said, "That's such a classic. I never get tired of seeing that one."

The scene of the final skit was a classroom to which a substitute teacher had been assigned, Mr. Buttlarge. The seat of Buttlarge's pants were padded to accentuate the size of his buttocks. The students make fun of and harass him until he eventually leaves in disgust. Although the skit was fairly uninteresting, Bob (our key respondent) played the role of the teacher, information he had not shared prior to this evening.

Following the skits, the venue shifted to the informal living room on the first floor for "The Smoker," the traditional social mixer during which every rushee attempts to meet every member of the house who will be returning in the fall. It is critical for the rushee to make a good impression with as many members as possible during this brief period of conversation for it is essentially on this performance that house members will decide who gets a bid.

The bids will be delivered at brunch the next morning, although the rushees are not aware of that fact. Depending on the number of rushees, this portion of the evening can take up to three hours to permit everyone to meet everyone else. After The Smoker, the evening has ended for the rushees, which is relatively early, usually before midnight. A senior in the house stays with the rushees for awhile, and tells them a little bit about his personal experiences in the house before the rushees go to bed. Rushees are instructed not to set alarms, and that their host will wake them up in the morning and escort them to brunch.

Because successful rushees are to receive their bids in a few hours, members still have a lot to do on Saturday night after the rushees are put to bed. It is at this point that "hash" takes place. Hash is a term that

describes an activity associated not only with rush, but any time when members get together in a private meeting--such as house elections--to talk about someone who is not in the room at the time.

In this form of hash, each rushee is discussed individually and members vote on whether the respective rushee will be offered a bid in the morning. In turn, the strengths and weaknesses of each person are discussed as a rushee's Information Sheet is consulted and his picture shown by an overhead projector. Anyone who has an opinion is encouraged to speak and, indeed, many actives express their views. When everyone has had their say, a vote is taken using the traditional white and black balls.

A misconception widespread among pledges is that just one negative vote, or black ball, eliminates a rushee from receiving a bid. However, according to Bob, the process is not necessarily that rigid. Any member who casts a negative vote must write a signed note to the Rush Chairs that night explaining the reason(s) for the negative vote. This procedure is called "mailboxing," apparently because of the manner in which the note is delivered; it is slipped under the Rush Chairs' door or put in their mailbox. The member casting the negative vote must also sit next to that rushee at brunch the following morning. The Rush Chairs are the only ones who know the outcome of the vote and have some flexibility in determining whether the reasons are persuasive for blackballing a particular rushee. Rush Chairs occasionally exercise some discretion in determining the number of black balls required to eliminate a rushee. That is, one "or even two" black balls may not automatically keep a rushee from receiving a bid. A rushee who is blackballed may end up receiving a bid or, perhaps, be invited back for another chance at rush. This aspect of rush is handled somewhat differently from year to year, depending on the Rush Chairs' interpretation of chapter rules. In any event, before hash ends, a decision is made on each rushee present that weekend. The hash process sometimes does not conclude until 3:00 or 4:00 AM which makes for a very long night for the members.

In the event that as many as half the rushees do not receive bids, the house hosts two brunches, one early and one late, in an effort to deal expeditiously with the resulting embarrassment for all parties. All those that do not get a bid are escorted to one of the brunches and told simply, "We'll get back to you." In certain borderline cases (although a rejected rushee is not informed of such status), "getting back to you" may mean an invitation to a subsequent Rush Weekend. In most cases, however, the rushee simply never receives a bid. All those who will receive bids are escorted to the other brunch.

Sometimes those receiving bids are led to believe initially that they have not been selected. For example, someone (such as a sibling already in the house) may whisper to a legacy before lunch, "I'm sorry," in reference to the prospects of a bid. After leaving him to contemplate his failure, he is later told that they he has, indeed, been accepted. It is not uncommon, too, for legacies to be told that because of their status they won't make it the first time. From the moment an individual is accepted into the house as a pledge, other mind games--some might label such antics to be "hazing"--begin.

Receiving a bid is a significant event. Some feel relieved, many are truly elated. A recent initiate recalled being "excited to be asked to join INS. It made me feel already like coming down a step ahead of everybody else. . .like I would be part of getting good grades. . ." For some, receiving a bid exceeds their wildest expectations. Little do they know that when young men--most of whom are still in high school, some of whom have not yet been admitted to the institution--sign an INS bid, their lives will be transformed. They will simply not be the same anymore.

<u>Pledgeship</u>

> They tell you that some of the best memories you have will be during pledgeship, and you go, 'Bullshit!' But they're right. . . It was the roughest thing you'd ever want to go through." And some said, 'Never again.' (INS member)
>
> It's tough, it's hazing (according to some), but it's got a lot of integrity to it, too. (INS Pledge Educator)

Before the beginning of the fall term, INS pledges move directly into the house. Very soon after their arrival the formal pledgeship process begins. There is no predetermined length to the pledgeship program, though a period of about nine or ten weeks is common. The amount of time required for a class to complete pledgeship is determined by how long it takes for them to "come together as a group." Indeed, PCU--Pledge Class Unity--is the value that is emphasized above all others during pledgeship at INS.

According to the documents that describe induction into Iota Nu Sigma, the Pledge Education Program is designed to:

(1) Create and foster brotherhood within the pledge class.
(2) Develop respect for active brothers, the fraternity and its traditions.
(3) Promote good study habits and high academic achievement.
(4) Integrate pledges into the fraternity.
(5) Educate the pledges about all aspects of the fraternity.
(6) Encourage involvement in extra-curricular activities.

The Pledge Educators (PEs), officially known as the Pledge Education Committee, are made up of "four active members whose character, activities, leadership, and commitment to the fraternity best exemplify our high standards." Each pledge class is under the direction of the PE Committee, which has one sophomore and three other members from the junior and senior classes. During the pledgeship period, the PEs--in essence--run the house: "They assess fines, close the house, call off activities. . .they're it" as far as house leadership.

The following section summarizes the events of pledgeship, in chronological order, for recent INS initiates. Various aspects of INS pledgeship are presented, including detailed descriptions of Steam Bath and Holiday Party, the first and last nights of pledgeship respectively. Not all aspects of pledgeship are discussed in depth, of course. However, according to our INS respondents, most of the important events, key concepts, and routine practices that define pledgeship are represented in the following sampling.

Rookie Week. According to the PE files, pledges are expected to move into the house the Wednesday before fall classes begin. The period of time before classes start when pledges are in the house is called "Rookie Week." As with other labels attached to pledges (e.g., "frogs," "green-asses," "wet-asses," or "anything else derogatory"), the term, "rookie," has a negative connotation. According to pledge education documents, the official goal of Rookie Week is for the "new pledge class to meet each other and to become accustomed to living together." Further, it is stipulated: "No rules as such (are) placed on the pledges" at this time.

Some pledges believe that pledgeship begins as soon as they move into the house, during this Rookie Week. But that impression is wrong. One said, "We thought we'd started but we really hadn't." Others are convinced that pledgeship has not begun. But because no one really knows anything for sure--about the process or what is to come--the topic of pledgeship is not a burning topic of conversation. For the most part, pledges are just content to "be." One individual had the impression pledgeship would be "hell. . . But I made up mind that I wasn't going to quit, no matter what." Another said, "I didn't think it was going to be that hard. . .[particularly since we] sort of had it sugarcoated when we first came to school."

One recent initiate described Rookie Week: "It was generally boring. We watched tennis during the day and partied at night. Brothers would go out and buy beer. . . We'd dorm storm, invite girls over. . . During the day we did absolutely nothing." A former PE confirmed that members would buy the beer that week, and that pledges would get pretty drunk. "The brothers sort of encourage that because [the pledges] do stupid things." The pledges at this time are described as "green as hell. . .some of their comments, some of their ideas. . . They'll say things to actives like, 'Aw, fuck off,' and 'They'll say things to people's girls friends when they're drunk, and we certainly entice that'."

One of the things that the pledges are unaware of is the Bitch Book, which is essentially a log of all the "stupid things" that they do and say

during this week. This information, as we shall see, later comes back to haunt the unsuspecting rookies.

The Monday of the first day of classes, the pledges' first Monday on campus, marks the end of Rookie Week and the point at which pledgeship officially begins. The "wake up call," so to speak, comes loud and clear in the form of Steam Bath.

Steam Bath. The PE documents indicated that the purpose of Steam Bath is "to INFORM and INSTRUCT the new pledges, not intimidate or scare them." Despite the goals and caveats contained in this phrase, Steam Bath is--according to pledges--an intimidating, scary time. "We were petrified," one INS member told us.

The first ritual in the Steam Bath tradition is a pledge class picture. Posters are hung in the bathroom announcing that the INS national headquarters wants a picture of the new pledge class. The group is instructed to report in coat and tie to the Den (a room normally reserved for seniors only) at 9:00 PM. Even at this hour, the temperature outdoors is often in the high eighties with a humidity reading to match. To make matters worse, the windows in the room have been closed on purpose, cutting off the ventilation. The photograph for the national office is finally taken. Then the PEs say, "We're going to take a crazy picture now, so drop your pants or loosen your tie or whatever. Then turn on the TV. After a bit somebody will be back to talk to you."

So, after the picture, about thirty guys in jackets sit and wait in a very small room with the doors and windows closed. In a short period of time the room becomes unbearable. Eventually a member does come in and, in the words of one active recalling the event, "Wham! . . .they shut off the lights at that point. The PE wasn't real pleased. . . Everybody was yelling at us. We had a little discussion, but it wasn't a two-way conversation. . . It was more like a drill sergeant to new recruits." What pledges are told, in a very loud, untoward tone of voice: "YOU GUYS COME DOWN HERE AND THINK YOU'RE INSs. YOU'RE NOT INSs.

YOU DON'T HAVE THE SLIGHTEST IDEA WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A INS!"

By this time, the rest of the house is "getting pretty rowdy." Everyone has changed into their blue INS intramural (IM) jerseys; a fair number are smoking cigars. The pledge class remains in the Den, with the lights out, perspiring profusely because of the oppressive physical conditions and the apprehension of the moment. (The room was so hot during one recent iteration of this event that the actives were worried that some pledges would pass out. No one did.) A member storms into the room and yells, 'SHUT UP! KEEP THESE LIGHTS OFF!' The pledges are kept in this room for probably an hour or so "and believe it or not, no one says a word." This quiet time, one member confided, was "the scariest part"; one can only imagine the anxiety and fear building up with each pledge.

After being yelled at again, the pledges were told to line up in alphabetical order. This seems like a simple enough task; yet it was relatively difficult at that point in time because the pledges did not yet know each others' names. Each pledge was instructed to put his left hand on the shoulder of the pledge ahead of him in line; then they were marched downstairs to the dining room area. The blinds appeared to be closed in this room; however, members were outside peering in between the cracks of the blinds to watch the event. The windows in this room were open so that not only could members hear what takes place, but also so that they can blow cigar smoke in. Pledges were lined up sitting in chairs, without tables, and the PEs took over for what was essentially a scripted speech to inform the pledges what INS pledgeship is all about.

First, the PEs read to the pledges, "What is a Fraternity," a long quotation about fraternity life. Then, referring to the Bitch Book, "they told us what we had done the entire [Rookie] week." The PEs "start storming off about what a complete bunch of idiots these guys are, how they have no respect for this fraternity, how they don't know what is means to be an INS." A first-year initiate recalled: "They had been observing us all of

Rookie Week. Somebody would have told you to do something wrong, and you'd get in trouble, like calling members by their nicknames."

"Then they laid down the law, too, saying, 'This is what you're going to do for pledgeship.'" The PEs actually shout out something like, "IN ORDER FOR YOU GUYS TO BECOME A PLEDGE CLASS, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE THESE RULES." One recent initiate recalled, "I thought the rules were a joke. . . [It] shocked me when I found out that they were for real." Another told us, "I was in for a surprise" when recalling the night of Steam Bath.

The rules of pledgeship are contained in the Pledge Educator files, although for any given pledge class the rules vary slightly. Although these rules are first described to pledges during Steam Bath, they are reiterated in many subsequent meetings with their advisors. Pledges soon adopt them as "a way of life." The rules are:

(1) Pledges shall keep secret any fraternity traditions or customs not proper to be made known.
(2) All pledges shall leave the house for class each morning by 9:00 AM, and return by 3:30 PM. Pledges are free to be in the Maple Room during this time. Entertainment of some sort will be provided (TV, stereo, ping-pong).
(3) Pledges not in class, or not conducting necessary business, shall study together QUIETLY in the library.
(4) Pledges shall acknowledge all actives at all times, using first names (and shall introduce themselves to actives whenever they encounter one they do not know).
(5) Pledges will not be allowed to consume alcohol or any intoxicating drugs.
(6) Pledges shall work together in the chapter house and are encourage to spend their free time on campus together.
(7) Pledges shall not display any INS letters.
(8) Pledges shall not enter the den except to clean.
(9) Pledges shall not enter the chapter house except through the designated "frog door."
(10) Pledges shall first fill in all corner seats next to the PEs (at meals), then fill in the remaining corner seats. Pledges may not sit at the President's table or the head of any table.

(11) Pledges shall say "pardon me" when being seated and "excuse me" when leaving the table at meals.
(12) Pledges shall answer the phone by stating, "Iota Nu Sigma, may I help you?"
(13) PLEDGES ARE REPRESENTING Iota Nu Sigma AND ARE EXPECTED TO ACT ACCORDINGLY AT ALL TIMES. THIS INCLUDES TREATING OTHERS WITH RESPECT AND COURTESY, AND INTRODUCING THEMSELVES TO GUESTS.

In addition, duties of "cleans" and "calls" are part of a pledge's life too, which are (as explained in the PE documents):

> Room Cleans--Freshmen are responsible for cleaning the room they live in. They will be given a standard list of what is required in a room clean. It will include things such as emptying trash and dusting, but won't include folding clothes, cleaning dip cup, etc. Room cleans will be done the entire freshman year.
>
> Friday Night Cleans--This consists of an intensive cleaning of the house. Freshmen will be assigned specific areas. These cleans shall begin at 8:00 PM and end at 12:00 PM. The class will then go to bed. By 9:00 AM the class is responsible for any areas the Pledge Education Committee finds unacceptable. These necessary corrections will be posted by 6:00 AM. Friday night cleans will take place all year long.
>
> Calls--Each freshman will be responsible for a certain number of calls (3-6). A call shall be a one-hour period in which a designated area of the house shall be cleaned and brothers shall be awakened by leaving a note on the Call Board. Wake-up calls will only be given on the half hour. Freshmen are responsible for calls all year long.

After enduring the episodes in the den and dining room, the pledges are quickly herded to what will be the first of many room changes during their pledgeship. One INS active described this event:

> The first room change happens that night and it's tough. The lights are out in the hallways and you've got 75 guys there in their jerseys, smoking cigars, everyone with the attitude, 'Yeah, we think you are a bunch of foul-ups.' [It's a] rude awakening. . .all the house turns on them. Guys are told to change rooms, and you're supposed to do it quick. . . You're getting yelled at, loud music is playing, there's lots of cigar

smoke. . . The room change is the first time that its stressed to work together as a pledge class.

After the pledges are finally allowed to go upstairs to the room where they sleep (called the cold dorm), they are met by two members who will serve as the advisors to their class for the duration. They were there "to explain what had just happened. . .it was really a great feeling. . . [They] gave us ice-cold cokes. . .it was really a relief to have somebody to talk to." The freshman advisors said, "Do you understand what's going on? Here's what's going on. . ." A member who recently experienced Steam Bath recalled: "After we were in the cold dorm, nobody would leave to go downstairs to get clothes, to brush their teeth or anything. . .everybody just went to bed."

There is no doubt that Steam Bath, as its name implies, is a shock to the system. The pledge's world has been transformed in a matter of a few hours from a very relaxed environment where essentially "anything goes" to a rigidly controlled, regulated routine with numerous sanctions imposed by the actives and little freedom for individual expression and spontaneity. Moreover, actives who had been sending occasional signals of acceptance (recall that some members procured alcohol for the pledges during Rookie Week) have become dominant oppressors who reject out of hand virtually everything pledges do.

A recent initiate told us: "Most of pledgeship I can look back on and laugh, you know, and say actually that was kinda fun, but that night, being in (the den), and going downstairs with all the cigar smoke everywhere, that was just not fun at all." A former PE said, "I don't care who you are, the littlest guy or the biggest, strongest guy, you're pretty intimidated." No part of a pledge's life is untouched after Steam Bath.

Study Tables. Recall that INS house grades were proudly displayed to rushees during Rush Weekend. Thus it would appear that promoting academic achievement through monitored study hours is in keeping with the goals of the fraternity. Indeed, as far we can determine, Study Tables were practiced pretty much as described in the PE files, with the exception

of Dad's Night or HP Night when the usual routine was interrupted at the end of the evening. PE guidelines for Study Tables are as follows:

> Beginning with the first day of classes and continuing until initiation, the freshman class will be required to attend study tables. Study tables will be held Sunday through Thursday nights in the dining room, will be proctored each night by the Scholarship Chairmen, and will be four hours in length (approximately 6:30 - 10:30). The dining room will be closed and no other active brothers will be allowed to enter during the study table hours. This time is set up for the benefit of the pledges and is designed to establish an effective pattern of study. Therefore no horseplay will be permitted. The pledges will not be allowed to study pertinent [defined below]. A 15 minute break will be given at the midway point and at this time pledges will be free to make popcorn and get refreshments. Following dismissal by the scholarship chairmen, the freshmen may either go to bed or continue studying in the dining room. The Maple Room will be set aside for necessary group study and tutoring as well as for typing papers. Those pledges needing to go to the library for research will be allowed to do so. The freshmen will also man the phone booth (one each evening) on a rotational basis during study table hours.

Meals. The PE manual explains:

> Pledges will be required to sit at the corner seats by the pledge educators first. They will be quizzed over the 'pertinent' [see below] assigned for that week. The quizzing shall not interfere with their eating. They shall be required to stay at lunches for 15 minutes so that they will eat.

Most initiates agreed that the "tables" ritual during meals was the worst part of pledgeship, a testimony which is somewhat surprising, given the events of Steam Bath described earlier. "[Pledges] are the first ones through (the line for meals). . .we 'click' (snap fingers) them through. . . They head to the tables, each with a PE at the head of the table. And a PE might say, 'Rookie, go around the table.'" The pledge is then forced to go from person to person at the table stating the "pert" (pertinent information) for each. "Pert" for each person in the house includes name, hometown, major, what he did in high school, what he did in the house, what he did in intramurals, campus activities, and if he has any legacies. "If he fouls up--

call it verbal abuse--he's told he should know that--they're supplied with the rookie book that has name, hometown, and majors of everyone in the house and he's expected to know that."

"When they yelled at you they would try and make it seem like everyone was screwing up. It was easier to take than directed at you personally," reported a recent initiate. A former PE told us:

> At the end they know everything about everyone in the house --high school and college pert. . . It's not easy to do this pledgeship. That inclusion process is much quicker if they're forced to learn this information. . . We don't make them do pushups . . . this is harder because it's mental. After 11 weeks they know a lot of information.

Part of what happens at tables could be characterized as "lessons," he added, "like encouraging them to get involved--which some might consider brainwashing, but what isn't? Life is brainwashing, college is brainwashing. . ."

A new member corroborated that psychological stress is the toughest part: "The mental aspects of it were really the shock, not the physical." Another member said:

> I could sit here and tell somebody who is going to be a pledge next year, tell him the program, and how it's run, and they'd come down here just like I did and say, 'I can handle it'. . . But you get there the first time, the first couple weeks, it's just something that catches you by surprise.

Weekends. If meals were the worst part of pledgeship, weekends were the best. The pledge class is strongly encouraged to stay together at all times, including weekends (from about mid-day Saturday until Sunday afternoon), and the majority did exactly that. Indeed, "a lot of the best memories were on the weekends," according to one freshman respondent. Of the 30 who started pledgeship in the most recent group, 27 completed and, of that number, "23 or 24 would remain together on Saturday night. "We'd want to stay together," another first-year member recounted. "You're in such bad situations with these people during the week, you want to be around them when you can have fun--you want to talk about [the week just

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endured]. "Usually we'd leave the house Saturday about noon and go to a local motel." On some weekends, the pledge class might stay at the home of a pledge's parents, but generally speaking, weekends were spent in motel rooms. By this time, each pledge had been given his nickname, or house name, which was the name pledges were expected to use to address each other.

According to the INS pledgeship rules, pledges are not allowed to drink alcohol. On the weekends, however, pledges were "off" (similar to off-duty); thus drinking on the weekends when pledges were away from the house was typical. "We weren't supposed to drink during pledgeship, but it wasn't really enforced, like on the weekends," said one member.

"We all got together, drink, laugh about what happened during the last week--who screwed up the most--(and would) say, 'Whew, that was rough!'" One senior recalled: "There's no question that when we're away from the house we would drink. . . You could (might as well) ask, 'Why are we alive?' I don't know why everybody has to do this, but it's something there's no question about; of course we are (going to drink)."

The INS Luau. In addition to the weekends "off," there were several house-sponsored events for which the no-alcohol rule for pledges was suspended. The first of these was the INS Luau, a celebration held every fall which has a Hawaiian theme. Pledges spend the week prior to the Luau preparing the house for the event.

> For a week we had to shovel sand and get the house decorated. . . They bought us alcohol for the Luau. . . .'Hairy Buffalo,' [they called it]. . .the most disgusting thing . . .made by the trash can [full consisting of] vodka, Everclear, fruit punch, and fruit pieces. Worst part is that the next day everybody is hung over, and what you built in a week you have to clean up in a day.

Because the Luau is so much work for pledges, even though they can drink the party is not a particularly great time. "It wasn't much fun," said one. "I just thought it sucked!", another said. One point in the evening that stands out in the minds of recent initiates was when "we had to sing a song to the seniors and their dates. It was a great song, it was awesome . . .

[but] we got pelted. . .with potatoes, barbecue sauce. . ." Of course, pledges must rejoin their dates after having had food thrown at them during the time they were performing.

Dad's Night. Another event for which the no-alcohol rule is suspended is the evening when members of the pledge class are assigned their Fraternity Dad. According to the PE files:

> Each freshman will receive a fraternity father during the second or third week of the program. [In practice, however, it usually does not occur that soon.] The fratdads are assigned by the Pledge Education Committee based upon requests by the eligible brothers and pledges along with common personality traits and academic interests. The Dads will be responsible for monitoring their son's academic progress, as well as his general well being. . .[and] shall serve as their son's confidante, friend and mentor.

A former PE told us that on Dad's Night:

> We do what some might consider hazing. . .(we) yell at the freshmen, blindfold them, tell them how rotten they're doing . . .yell at them some more and lead them down to the dining room, (and) when the blindfolds are removed their Dad is there saying, 'Have a beer.'

A recent initiate recalled it this way:

> We were downstairs studying, and they started yelling at us . . .told us to put our books away and be in the den in five minutes. . . [They] blindfolded us, by having us take off our shirt, which was then used as a blindfold. . .and [they yelled at us. . .'You guys suck,' and then led us back, kinda taunted us. . . Beer gets thrown at us. . . and then sat us down and then they took your blindfold off, your Dad is in front of you with a beverage to drink. When you meet your Dad, he gives you his jersey to wear.

Another member said, "What starts off as a bad time, ended up as good. [Now you have] at least one older member you're connected with." Another member remembered the "intense yelling and stuff, but the first thing that comes to mind is the fun. . . kinda gives you a taste of what life [in this fraternity] is going to be like. . . everybody is going to be nice to you and stuff." Another member told us: "You got to yell at the PEs. . .

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whatever we wanted to say to them. . . (which was) encouraged by the brothers. . .(it was) entertainment for them. . . They want to see it as much as we want to do it." In the words of another member, "everybody is nice to you [except the four guys, the PEs]; you could say anything to them that night. It really pushes you on after that, it connects you to the house and you have fun with the brothers that night--that was a great night."

A former PE said: "They'll drink plenty. They've been yelled at for drinking, but now they're able to do it. They drink because they want to." A first-year member admitted: "It was expected that drinking would occur during Dad's Night. A lot of us drank more than we should have. Everybody was laughing, running around having a good time."

After the brothers and pledges drink together, the pledge class visited a sorority houses to serenade them. "We went to [about five houses], then we came back again and did it a second time."

A recent initiate told us:

> Had they not had alcohol that night ("two or three kegs . . . we drained 'em"), I don't think it would have gone quite the same. I think that loosened us up. . . I know that's bad to say.

A former PE emphasized, however, that drinking was not required of pledges that night. PEs keep a calendar of each pledge's academic commitments (tests, papers, presentations, and so on); if a pledge has such responsibilities the next day he is excused from participating in the drinking and serenading. A recent initiate told us: "Sure you're going to get drunk, and you're going to get drunk pretty quick, but . . .if you didn't want to drink you didn't have to." And another offered that, looking back at all that happened that night, that "alcohol was not the main focus of the evening."

The Walkout. This activity is a planned event where the pledge class leaves the house for several days, culminating with a trip to an INS chapter on another campus. PE files say that the event is:

> organized and assisted by the freshmen advisors, who will plan any activities, such as chartering a bus or contacting the chapter they will be visiting. They will be allowed to leave whenever they desire, but advised not to leave the house until at least Wednesday for the week they are walking out.

A former PE recalled that The Walkout:

> used to be a full week, but now we try to wait till Wednesday, then have three or four days away from the house. We leave, get hotel rooms, get kicked out after we get too rowdy, get another hotel room. . . These rooms are a mess. . .clothes piled up waist high. It was the wildness that bothered the hotels.

A first-year member freshman observed:

> The whole idea of The Walkout is to be all together because if [the actives] capture you they take you back [to the house]. One year they taped a pledge to a chair and put him out on the sidewalk. . . Saturday morning we left on the bus and went to [another college and we] had about twenty cases [of beer]. [The PEs] got us alcohol. People there didn't know where they INS house was. . . [It was a] real animal house.

As indicated above, the advisors obtained alcohol for the group and heavy drinking is the norm. One first-year member recalled that while The Walkout "wasn't a heavy drinking time for me, people who are heavy drinkers drank pretty heavily." Assessments of the experience for the most recent pledge class range from "It was lame," to "That was the best," and "It was a blast."

When the pledges return on Sunday evening their welcome home, by this time, is somewhat predictable.

> We couldn't come back until 10:00 or 11:00 or so. We got back and the whole house was dark, everybody was in their IM jerseys and we went up to the cold dorm, candles were lit, we got lined up and PEs just yelled at us for leaving (as if we weren't supposed to leave!). That was a traditional lineup like Steam Bath. . . [And they say], 'This house is a little messy so you're going to have to clean it up before you go to bed tonight.' There was shaving cream on the walls, and everything, but once we got cleaning we were like slap-happy. We were having a good time and acted like we enjoyed it.

Pledge Party. The PE documents state:

> The pledges will be allowed to have a dance during their program. The planning and organization is left to them, with assistance from the freshmen advisors. All pledges will be encouraged to attend with a date. The dance will be held in the chapter house, and be open only to the pledges and their dates. The date will be announced when appropriate by the pledge education committee.

Here is what actually happens.

On the day before the Pledge Party, about midway through pledgeship, the pledge class is informed that they will be allowed to have the party the next night. Everyone is instructed to get a date because the event will be cancelled if even one pledge ends up dateless. "They told us on Wednesday that we were having a Pledge Party on Thursday and that we had to get a date. If somebody didn't have a date then we couldn't have it," said one first-year member. Another said that this was "another surprise [like Dad's Night]. . . . We had about 36 hours notice." The pledges are to arrange for the music and prepare the house as well. "We had to decorate and figure out how to get music and stuff. . . They got us the alcohol. . . We didn't know (how do to) any of this stuff."

The pledges selected two seniors to be bartenders for the event; actives also were designated to drive pledges and dates home after the party. Traditionally, pledges drink a lot and ignore their dates; the women usually are driven home without their original INS pledge escort. Recent initiates described the events of the evening this way:

> "It's not exactly a formal affair. . .we all pretty much got hammered and the girls didn't get as hammered as we did." "Everybody sort of ignores the dates. The members told us that we wouldn't be taking our dates home. . . I told my date that she'd have a ride home." "Most of us got lucky and picked girls we didn't know that well, and then we just got hammered. . ." "Most of the girls were a little upset [so] then we got really hammered to really piss 'em off. . "[This was a] very improvised evening . . .everybody got just blitzed that I know of." "I don't think that any date that came over here would speak to the person they came with again. . . ."

Why are women required to be a part of this event if the purpose of the evening is to get drunk and, in essence, ignore them? One member explained that the "dates are a symbol of having a date." The messages communicated through such an event about the dignity and role of women will be discussed in the next chapter. Another said that it was as if the actives

> had almost run out of things to yell at us about, so they let us do the Pledge Party. It seems that that's all we heard about for the next week. [They would say], 'You got drunk and I had to carry your ass to bed.'

Another freshman recalled, "I got pretty sick . . . One of the PEs had to take care of me. . .[but] I wasn't close to death or anything."

HP Night. The term HP is an acronym for **H**oliday **P**arty because, as a former PE put it, "It's the best present we could give (the pledges)." HP Night is usually a Sunday night (although as we shall soon see it can occur on other nights of the week) about nine or ten weeks following the official start of pledgeship (Steam Bath), and marks the conclusion of pledgeship, when the pledge class has demonstrated that it has finally "come together." Some years ago, when pledgeship was a longer period of time, HP Night occurred closer to the December holidays. The timing of HP Night is determined by such things as the following day's academic schedules for the pledge class as a whole. There was, incidentally, no description of this event in the Pledge Education Committee documents.

A former PE began his recollection of that night: "Wow, you talk about a lot of planning . . . [It was] kinda fun for actives and pledges. . .an emotional night." A recent initiate also recalled it as a very emotional experience, "Sort of like being on a high school team and winning sectionals." A description of the night follows in the alternating voices of some pledges and one PE as they talked about it in separate interviews.

> **Pledges:** We had been told that we should get things taken care of on the weekend since we wouldn't have time during the following week. We were at study tables Monday night; no one got a bit of studying done. At the end of study tables the academic advisor left and the PEs came down and closed

the blinds. We were just sitting in there waiting and one of the seniors came in and said, 'I NEED TO SEE MOOSE (a nickname for one of the pledges),' and then he left. We said, 'What the hell? They've always told us to stay together and now they're separating us?' People were freaking out! What they did was, four guys [were out there and] said, 'Hey, you're done with pledgeship, you made it. Go through those doors.' A couple of seniors were there and they gave you all kinds of hell. . .that was like old-school fraternity hazing. . . . I must have done 130 pushups that night.

Pledge Educator: [The actives say], 'Congratulations, you're done.' [The pledges] are taken out one by one. 'Now, get into the hallway.' Someone else is out there telling them what to do now . . . And we start telling them to imitate certain animals, 'YOU'RE A PIG, SO ACT LIKE A PIG RIGHT NOW!' or 'YOU'RE A PIECE OF BACON--START SIZZLING!'. . . until all pledges have gone through the process of being taken out one by one. Then they were told to line up in the hallway. Then, the New PEs show up. [These] people are pissed off at the way you have been acting. . .completely embarrassed the house for the last ten weeks. . . The New PEs are tired of it, are going to take over for the Old PEs and the pledge class is now going to have Hell Week. The new rules for Hell Week (they're 'kind of a joke,' they're 'made up') are like:

YOU HAVE TO SLEEP IN THE BOILER ROOM.
YOU HAVE TO MAN THE HOUSE PHONE 24 HOURS A DAY.
NO SHOWERING.
YOU CAN ONLY SHAVE ONE SIDE OF YOUR FACE.

These New PEs are in military garb. . .pretty muscular guys. . .and pretty drunk. . . They're loud and punch holes in walls. They have beer bottles in hand, kinda like an abusive father coming home drunk, and now you're worried. They're throwing beer bottles against the wall, smashing them. It's pretty dangerous, screaming right in their face.. It's a really intimidating environment.

Pledges: After they get done, the [New] PEs come in, and they were so drunk, they were hammered. That was probably the most violent time of pledgeship because they had paddles and they were hitting the walls, but they didn't hit us. It was loud and they were slamming the walls and it was dark. The whole key is that they say that this is the beginning of Hell Week and were laying down all these rules, 'YOU HAVE TO HOLD HANDS IN CLASS, YOU HAVE TO MAKE ALL CALLS TOGETHER, etc.' At that point [it's] unbelievable.

Pledge Educator: At this point, the Old PEs come back down with the message, saying, 'HEY WE FAILED WITH YOU. YOU GUYS SUCK, YOU'RE HORRIBLE, WE'RE DONE WITH YOU, THE NEW PEs WILL DEAL WITH YOU NOW.'

Pledges: We went up to the Cold Dorm. The president told us, 'It's really out of control. Just try to get through this. This is totally illegal, you can't tell anybody about this.' We really thought it was serious.

Then we go to bed. All the mattresses are gone, so we're sleeping on bed springs. Somebody came up and started yelling again. They have us strip down to our underwear and line up alphabetically according to our mother's maiden names. They took us downstairs to the cafeteria where all the brothers were sitting on chairs . . .throwing beer and water, cold, cold water on us. . (and) introduced the (Old) PEs. . . They did skits.

Pledge Educator: Then we put them to bed, for about ten minutes, then woke them up and brought them downstairs. This is called 'spoons.' Really a bunch of skits put on by the Old PEs. They think up skits for these guys. Also the freshmen are in their underwear and have cold water thrown on them. Spoons are soaked in cold water and ice. . . And as freshmen start laughing [at the skits] a spoon is inserted in their mouth and a guy may get four or five spoons put in his mouth and of course he's freezing to death in his underwear in front of the whole house. . .(who are) still in IM jerseys and smoking cigars, just laughing. Some people are so drunk that they're out of control. They guys won't shut up. You've got an obnoxious bunch of drunks.

You're cold, a bunch of guys have got spoons in their mouth, you're freezing. . it's funny, but at the same time it sucks. . .and it's certainly demeaning, personally demeaning. You're laughed at, people will throw beer at you; that hurts, cold beer all over you. You're put to bed again and [you] start kinda believing [that Hell Week is for real].

Pledges: The whole time we were sitting there we weren't supposed to laugh, smile, do anything. The skits were about us, so we related to them. If you laugh they give you a spoon and it's dipped in something pretty crappy. Then they took us upstairs and told us to go to bed now.

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Pledge Educator: Then we wake them up again and have 'frog races' around the warm dorm. . . [It is laid out like an] obstacle course. Each freshman races against another freshman, around bunk beds padded with mattresses. . . The loser of each race goes through the 'haunted house' downstairs [blindfolded]. The winner keeps racing until finally everybody loses. Each station [of the haunted house downstairs] does different things to the freshmen. For example, there's one with a trash can completely full of ice water. . . [The pledge] gets in completely, gets his hair wet, and then gets out. Another is like 'Space Invaders' where the freshman is like a video game man, an invading alien, and the actives throw wet toilet paper at you until you are 'dead.' Then you move on. There's one where the pledge is spun around on an oily table.

Pledges: We were in bed for ten minutes, and after we got our ten minutes of sleep, we were lined up and blindfolded, had to go through an obstacle course. The loser went downstairs and ended up getting humiliated pretty much one on one. . . [You were] blindfolded, spun on a table and [the actives] acted like they were going to paddle you. They didn't paddle you, though.

Each room had something different, like you came in to the Den and did pushups, acted like snakes. It was really stupid . . . They kind of yell at you, then we went upstairs and waited. They'd yell at you some more and then you came downstairs. They would say, 'THIS IS WHAT HELL WEEK IS GOING TO BE LIKE. CAN YOU HANDLE IT?'

Pledge Educator: Sometimes we make them touch stuff, or fill up a bota bag with hot water and tell them that we're pissing on them. You're getting abused, but you're not getting hurt. (One guy my year did cut his foot on glass and it was pretty much over for him, though.) . . . And anybody who comes out of it says it's kinda fun, like going to an amusement park. After haunted house we take them downstairs into the dining room area. We yell at them, 'DO YOU REALLY WANT TO BE AN INS?'

Pledges: They ask, 'Do you want to be an INS?' 'YES!,' we'd say. 'What are you?,' they scream. 'SHIT!', we'd scream back. 'What do you want to be?' 'An INS!' 'So be it. . .' Your blindfold comes off and you're done. Some of them give you their IM jerseys.

Pledge Educator: The blindfold comes off and you just know that you're done.

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Chapter 4

A Cultural Analysis of Fraternity Life

> Alcohol is a dominant cultural artifact; the form and meanings of drinking alcoholic beverages are culturally defined, as are the use of any other major artifact (Mandelbaum, 1965, p. 281).

Acculturation processes similar to those of Iota Nu Sigma described in the preceding chapter played a prominent role in all the groups we studied. These experiences provide some clues to what it means to be a fraternity member and how one is to behave in various circumstances. In this chapter we use the cultural perspectives framework introduced in Chapter 1 to discuss our findings about the role of alcohol in fraternity life and how fraternity culture influences alcohol use.

The chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, we summarize the properties of fraternity culture that seem to be inextricably intertwined with hazardous use of alcohol and the constellation of attitudes that support such hedonistic, potentially self-destructive behavior. Then, we analyze the methods that fraternities use to inculcate in their members these attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors.

When reviewing the cultural properties of fraternities associated with alcohol use, keep in mind some of the caveats from Chapter 1. Fraternities do not exist apart from the societies and institutions that create and support them. That is, they are products of the larger cultural context in which they are found--the particular college or university (and its history, traditions, and mission), the region of the country and locale where the college is located, and a society that has for more than a century equated alcohol use with a dominant masculine model equated with success. Historians suggest that hedonism was once the exclusive prerogative of the male fraternity. Today, however:

> [this lifestyle] is now shared by any college student who chooses it. The main places for campus indulgence and fun lie off campus in bars, rather than in the fraternity houses. . . Local businesses ensure access to alcohol, music, and dancing to all who can pay. . . The ending of parietal regulations in

> dormitories. . . gives many undergraduates easy access to each other's bedrooms. Students find pleasure as easily outside the fraternity house as in. (Horowitz, 1987, pp. 274-275)

Defining Elements of Fraternity Culture

Fraternities develop certain properties over time that are observable manifestations of its core assumptions and strategic beliefs and perspectives. In this section we offer an admittedly incomplete description of some of the cultural properties that characterized INS and, to varying degrees, the other groups participating in this project. We have necessarily limited our description to those properties that encourage or discourage excessive use of alcohol. Many of the cultural properties that are woven into the tapestry of a fraternity's culture are not described in the following paragraphs; the cultures of these groups are much richer and more complex than presented here.

For purposes of understanding and elucidation, the properties are described according to the three interrelated layers of culture discussed in Chapter 1 (artifacts, strategic values and perspectives, assumptions and beliefs). Recall that these different layers are mutually shaping and it is not always possible to clearly link every observable manifestation of culture with underlying values, perspectives, and assumptions. That is, these cultural properties work together in complicated ways.

Artifacts

The physical environments of the fraternity houses suggested that alcohol plays a prominent role in group life. Party rooms and most individual member rooms are adorned by such accoutrements representing alcohol as beer mugs, electronic signs, and empty and occasionally full containers of beer, wine, and various forms of distilled spirits. Most houses have places where alcohol--specifically kegs--can be hidden from institutional agents. While such symbols of independence or rebellion are common to the youth culture as described by Horowitz (1987) and Moffatt (1989), and can be found in residence hall rooms and off-campus student apartments as well, accumulating this amount of such material in a single

dwelling seems more appropriate for a drinking club, not the residence of young men committed to academics, philanthropy, and leadership.

Alcohol also is featured in the lexicon of the fraternity. Conversations among members and their dates frequently are dominated by describing experiences with alcohol, or about behavior at events at which alcohol was present. They have developed a special language to talk about this part of their lives. Intermingling phrases such as beer-goggling and mash-and-dash, alcohol becomes synonymous with sexist behavior. Women were almost always relegated to instrumental roles in organized fraternity functions when alcohol was available. Recall the Pledge Party, "Petal Ins", and the Rush Weekend skits.

As a behavioral artifact in the culture of these fraternities, alcohol is used in different ways, at different times, by different groups of people for different purposes. Organized social events rarely take place without alcohol. Exhausting the alcohol supply signals the end of most social events. The privilege of using alcohol symbolizes full membership in the group, a preordinate goal for most newcomers, given what they must endure to attain such status. Actives (whether of legal age or not) drink whenever they want. Actives also regulate the consumption of alcohol by pledges. Even "dry rush"--an externally imposed policy to reduce the influence of alcohol on group life--is used by Pledge Educators and actives to underscore alcohol as a symbol of full membership; that is, alcohol is provided and withheld to punctuate the differences in membership status and to teach newcomers what is expected in social settings so as to clearly differentiate one group from the other. As we shall see later in this chapter, this is a form of social control which the group uses in different ways to attain its primary goal which is to demand conforming behavior by newcomers.

The dominant attitude concerning alcohol use is illustrated by the description of Dad's Night at INS. Recall the freshman initiate who said, "Had they not had alcohol that night (he recalls "2 or 3 kegs. . .") I don't think it would have gone quite the same. I think that loosened us up." Another freshman admitted, "It was expected that drinking would occur

during Dad's Night. A lot of us drank more than we should have. Everybody was laughing, running around having a good time." Still another said, "sure you're going to get drunk, and you're going to get drunk pretty quick, but I know that they. . .if you didn't want to drink you didn't have to."

During Rookie Week, newcomers were made to feel as though they were part of the organization because actives allowed them to do whatever they pleased including procuring alcohol for them. Alcohol, which is already viewed as a desirable commodity by 18 year olds away from home and experiencing independence from parents and family for the first time, becomes even more desirable when it is withheld from them by the Pledge Educators beginning with the opening night of pledgeship, Steam Bath. Remember, too, that actives were openly using alcohol at this and other events; the so-called "dry-pledgeship" holds only when members **say** it holds. That is, at times specified by the PEs, pledges are allowed to use alcohol. Alcohol both encourages and is used as an excuse for the aggressive, domineering control actives exert over pledges beginning with Steam Bath.

Note, too, that the times when alcohol use is sanctioned during pledgeship is either when women participated in the event, or the event was designed to bond members of the pledge class to each other or to a significant other figure in the group, such as their Fraternity Dad. Thus, alcohol is a dominant behavioral artifact, not only during the initial weeks of becoming an INS but also in the experiences beyond pledgeship. These fraternities seemed to use alcohol as a facilitating agent to bolster one's identity as a man and to mark the way to full membership in the group, a point to which we shall return later.

Values

Given the purposes of this study, it is understandable that it was easier to discover the values of these groups by comparing what they **say** they stand for (espoused values) with what they **do** (enacted values). As with their counterparts both contemporary and historical (Strange, 1986),

these fraternities espoused intellectual and humanitarian values. Among the high ideals which are presumably institutionally embraced (at least according to material distributed to prospective students and their parents) is acceptance of others without regard to race, creed, sex, or sexual orientation (Maisel, 1990). The groups in this study, however, typified the college man culture, perpetuating hedonistic, anti-intellectual behaviors and attitudes including sexism, racism, and homophobia.

The role of peers in selecting members, dating back to the founding of Phi Beta Kappa in 1776 (Egan, 1985), insures that the group will remain free from external control and provides the illusion of exercising independent judgment. The notion of "independent judgment" is an illusion because of the powerful forces exerted by the group's culture to demand conformity--by identifying newcomers who are similar to current members, by excluding those who are different through denying bids (e.g., blackballing), and by systematically socializing newcomers until they exhibit conforming behavior.

Claims about the "diversity" of chapter members would seem almost ludicrous if it were not for the sincerity with which they were offered. Our fraternity men believed that varying interests in sports, clothing, and major fields represented important human differences. Such claims would be more convincing if other forms of diversity were represented in the group, such as respectful attitudes toward women, people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, and persons with sexual orientations other than heterosexual. The hegemony that characterizes the college man described by Horowitz (1986, 1987) remains firmly rooted in these fraternities.

Our fraternity chapters also espoused academic and philanthropic aims in the context of Christian charity and brotherhood; recall from Chapter 1 the statement by the National Interfraternity Conference Decalogue:

> The college fraternity stands for excellence in scholarship [and] accepts its role in the moral and spiritual development of the individual. Recognizing the importance of physical

> well-being, the college fraternity aims for a sound mind and a sound body.

While the importance of good grades was emphasized in most of these groups, the motivation to achieve was not necessarily prompted by educational values but rather to create an image in the minds of institutional agents and alumni that the group was towing the line, behaving appropriately to make them eligible for the right jobs or graduate school (i.e., a means to an end). If the pledge class GPA and house GPA were satisfactory, the group was--at least in the minds of the members--less likely to be hassled by the dean. Recall the advice of the POB member (Chapter 2) for steering clear of the administration: "Philanthropy, doing a lot of philanthropy, grades, house GPA on campus, intramurals, everything like that. . .staying out of trouble."

The emphasis on Pledge Class Unity, the daily routines, and the ritualistic practices required of pledges makes it clear that conformity and group welfare are valued over the individual. This mentality makes it very difficult to change the group, and virtually insulates fraternities from accepting criticism from external observers, a point to which we shall return in Chapter 5.

Assumptions

According to Schein (1985), every organization with some history holds a core belief about the nature of relations among its members and other groups. Not enough time was spent with these groups for us to state with a high degree of confidence that we discovered the driving assumptions and beliefs of INS or any of the other organizations. However, one of the cultural findings in which we are confident is that members of fraternities view themselves as "special," or apart from, other students and other groups on the campus. One of the incontrovertible, nonconfrontable, and nondebatable beliefs of an INS member is, "We can do whatever we want," as long as no one beyond the group knows or is directly affected.

An elitist self-perception allows a fraternity to compartmentalize certain aspects of its behavior and organizational functioning when those

aspects conflict with institutional expectations, civil law, and even policy directives issued by their own national headquarters. For example, consuming alcohol in fraternity houses often is contrary to institutional policy; even in those instances where a campus permits alcohol use, most fraternity members are not of legal drinking age and, therefore, are engaged in illegal activity when drinking in the house.

It is clear that the ultimate authority in determining whether behavior is acceptable or valued is the group itself, not the institution or other external parties. Many of the values and practices that support the unlawful and occasionally hazardous use of alcohol, and set the group above external influence in the eyes of its members, have historical roots. From the European influence of the guilds, full membership is earned through an apprenticeship of sorts, pledgeship. The fierce loyalty to the group is a byproduct of induction experiences which also protect the group from internal threats (rebellion) and insulate it from externally-imposed changes required by institutional policies and national headquarter directives.

Membership selection procedures preserve the elitism and prestige that distinguish these groups from other campus organizations. This elitist self-perception is deeply rooted in the psyche of these groups, a byproduct of their organizational history and traditions (e.g., secret constitutions, symbols and ceremonies, a willingness to defend itself from internal and external threats by calling for the support of influential alumni). These ideas are explained in somewhat greater detail in Appendix B, a brief history of men's fraternities.

People-Processing in Fraternities

A fraternity's culture provides direction for how members are to deal with recurring issues and fundamental tasks--from insulating the group from external threats to managing internal affairs, from handling crises to inculcating new members, from dealing with growth or decline to maintaining morale. "Culture, therefore, is what is taught and reinforced to members as the proper way to perceive, think, feel and act vis a vis crises and tasks" (Lundberg, 1990, p. 20).

Through its symbols and patterned activities, a fraternity displays its unique qualities which define who group members are as a collective. Its culture brings order and coherence to daily life, what people in this group do together and why they bother doing it. As cultural meanings are acquired, members learn what is generally expected and what behavior is desired, appropriate, inappropriate, and taboo. Culture also helps a group deal with uncertainty and reduces anxiety by providing answering such questions as: Who are we? What are we about? How should we behave? Over time, members acquire an "operational cause map" (Argyris, 1982; Lundberg, 1989), or shared system of beliefs and values, which allows them to see things pretty much the same way. As illustrated in Chapter 3, fraternities speed up the acquisition of the cause map by newcomers through rush and pledgeship activities.

The defining cultural elements of fraternities are perpetuated, reproduced, and made virtually unassailable to external modification because of the purposeful, thorough, and complete socialization of new members (Schein, 1990). Van Maanen (1978) called this kind of socialization experience "people processing"--the structuring of "an identifiable set of events that will make certain behavioral and attitudinal consequences more likely than others" (p. 20). If efforts to modify how fraternities induct newcomers are to be successful, they must be based on a solid conceptual understanding of how and why the socialization processes used by these groups are so effective.

The overall goal of people-processing is to make newcomers "fit" the group. Novices learn acceptable behaviors, the socially constructed knowledge of the group (its saga), and the values, abilities, and strengths and expectations of the group. The most crucial aspect of this process is internalizing group norms. Learning them is one thing, accepting and living by them is quite different but crucial nonetheless to continuity of group values (Long & Hadden, 1985).

People processing is important to a fraternity's health and vitality for many reasons. People joining a new organization often experience some

degree of anxiety; this anxiety is ameliorated as people learn what the group expects and how to behave. Newcomers are constantly looking for cues and clues about what to do and how to do it. The behavior of peers and group leaders often is mimicked by newcomers because it is a low risk strategy for fitting in. Learning occurs best in an active mode in the company of peers, not with a passive approach in isolation (e.g., reading a group's history, constitution, or bylaws). A group's ability to survive in the long term depends on whether new members can effectively carry out necessary tasks.

So we can see that the primary purpose of rush and pledgeship is to teach newcomers the group's values, customs, and fundamental facts about group life. Another purpose is to allow upperclassmen to exert control over newcomers, thereby preserving traditions and teaching newcomers how to view the group, the upperclassmen, and themselves (pledges). This control is important to insuring stability and continuity in the wake of losing its senior members to graduation (Crandall, 1978). And for some small number of newcomers, pledgeship offers an opportunity to decide if the fraternity life is a correct choice (Egan, 1985; Jones & Gidney, 1951; Johnson, 1972; Kahler, 1987).

People-processing, or socialization, can take a variety of forms and produce markedly different results depending on the form of socialization and the individual. Building on the work of Van Maanen (1978), (Schein, 1990, p. 116) described seven forms of people-processing in organizations:

> 1. Group versus individual--the degree to which the organization processes recruits in batches (as in military boot camp), or individually (as in professional offices);
> 2. Formal versus informal--the degree to which the process is formalized (as in set training programs), or is handled informally (as in apprenticeships or individual tutoring by a coach or immediate superior);
> 3. Self-destructing and reconstructing versus self-enhancing--the degree to which the process minimizes individuality and self-expression and emphasizes group identity (as in boot camp), or enhances aspects of the self (as in professional development programs);

4. Serial versus disjunctive--the degree to which role models are provided (as in apprenticeships or mentoring programs), or are deliberately withheld (as in sink-or-swim initiations in which recruits are expected to find their own solutions);
5. Sequential versus random--the degree to which the process guides recruits through a series of discrete steps and roles, or is uncertain in that newcomers never know what organizational role will come next;
6. Fixed versus variable--the degree to which stages of the training process have fixed timetables for each stage (as in military academies, boot camps, or rotational training programs), or are open ended (as in typical promotional systems where one is not advanced to the next stage until one is "ready"); and
7. Tournament versus contest--the degree to which each stage is an "elimination tournament" where failure requires banishment from the group, or a "contest" in which one builds up a track record and batting average.

Different combinations of socialization practices produce different outcomes (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Schein, 1990). A "custodial orientation" (Schein, 1990, p. 116) results when the newcomer conforms to all norms and adopts all of the group's assumptions. "Creative individualism" results when a newcomer learns most of the group's core assumptions and beliefs but rejects some peripheral to the group's survival, allowing the individual to respond creatively in performing organizational tasks (i.e., role innovation). Finally, "rebellion" may result when a recruit rejects some or all of the group's assumptions. If rebellious members cannot leave the group for whatever reasons, they may overtly or covertly undermine the group (Schein, 1990).

Schein (1990, p. 116) proposed that "the combination of socialization techniques most likely to result in a custodial orientation, or complete conformity, is: (1) formal, (2) self-destructing, (3) serial, (4) sequential, (5) variable, and (6) tournament-like." Fraternity socialization produces a custodial orientation to the degree that rush and pledgeship are formal, sequential, self-constructing, variable, and tournament-like.

In the case of INS, the group uses essentially the same formal sequence of events, recorded in the PE files, with every pledge class.

Virtually every pledge goes through a Rush Weekend similar to that described in Chapter 3. The daily pledgeship routine includes "calls," "cleans," "meals" and "study tables." The tedium of these daily experiences is broken up by The Weekends and other events which keep pledges in close proximity and persistent, continuing contact, which reinforces their choice of fraternity life and its values. Keep in mind that many of these events and experiences involve alcohol, often to abusive levels of consumption.

The two most intense events of pledgeship happen on the first (Steam Bath) and last (HP) nights, both of which illustrate the self-destructing-reconstructing nature of the process. Newcomers take on new identities (e.g., pledges are given a new "house name" or nickname). Pledgeship rules reinforce group or role identity over personal identity (e.g., always working together on cleans and calls, studying together, spending free time together during The Weekends, the robot-like recitation of pert, and restricting house entry to the frog door). Pledge classes at INS were constantly reminded of the importance of PCU (Pledge Class Unity), and that pledgeship would end only when they have "come together as a group." The pledgeship process, therefore, is variable and produces an eventual "coming together" of the group--a cohesiveness (for the pledge class and the entire fraternity) which is based on this common experience. This shared experience is largely the basis for the bond which eventually develops between the pledges and the actives.

Pledgeship is tournament-like in some respects. After signing the INS bid, a pledge must prove that he can successfully navigate the rocks and shoals of pledgeship before he can become a full member. Pledges are not dismissed from the program, however; those that leave do so on their own. But unless one can learn the ropes, survive, and conform at approximately the same rate as the rest of the pledge class, the pledgeship experience will be even more difficult than described in the preceding chapter. There is no alternate track to full member status. If a pledge cannot perform to the satisfaction of his peers and the PEs, he loses.

Because he has lost the tournament, he cannot be a member of the group and must leave.

Based on the formal, sequential, self-destructing, variable, and tournament aspects of rush and pledgeship, the resulting custodial orientation that characterizes INS is inevitable. This orientation includes, of course, using alcohol on specific occasions for different purposes. Even though rush and pledgeship are both characterized as "dry," alcohol consumption by pledges on The Weekends and at the Luau, Dad's Night, Walkout, and Pledge Party is "normal" and expected. These alcohol-approved events break up the monotony of daily routines (calls and cleans). The ritualistic, rowdy drunkenness on the part of actives is normal and expected during HP Night as well. The product of this custodial orientation with regard to alcohol is now obvious: integral to being an INS is regular use of alcohol and occasionally excessive use of alcohol. In this way, alcohol serves both as a symbol of rebellion which has been historically associated with fraternity membership, and an integral element in the intricate system of rewards and sanctions which insure conforming behavior by newcomers and actives alike, albeit in different ways for each status group member.

To account for INS' effectiveness in producing a custodial orientation within the membership, a closer look at the activities that constitute the self-destructing-reconstructing aspects of pledgeship is warranted. Most readers know these activities by another name: hazing.

Hazing: The Key to Effective Self-Destructing and Reconstructing

Hazing is integral to pledgeship in INS. Virtually all members participated, either as perpetrators (PEs, actives) or as recipients of the abuse (pledges). Although hazing is illegal, and can be quite dangerous--even fatal when taken to extremes (Nuwer, 1990)--INS members tended to minimize or deny the seriousness of these kinds of activities.

The kinds of people-processing methods used by INS are not peculiar to this group. Many of the hazing activities described in Nuwer's (1990), *Broken Pledges*, can be found in some form in INS. And for INS, as with

many other groups, the formal, self-destructing pledgeship process is the way things have been done for a long time, albeit with some modifications.

Before reflecting on what fraternity members think about hazing, consider how others have defined the concept. According to the Fraternity Executives Association, hazing is:

> . . .any action taken or situation created, intentionally, whether on or off fraternity premises, to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule. Such activities and situations include paddling in any form; creation of excessive fatigue; physical and psychological shocks; quests, treasure hunts, scavenger hunts, road trips, or any other activities carried on outside the confines of the house; wearing, publicly, apparel which is conspicuous and not normally in good taste; engaging in public stunts and buffoonery; morally degrading or humiliating games and activities; late work sessions which interfere with scholastic activities; and any other activities which are not consistent with fraternal law, ritual, or policy or the regulations of the educational institution (Nuwer, 1990, p. 25).

The following statement is from the student conduct code at one of the institutions participating in this study:

> . . .any conduct which subjects another person, whether physically, mentally, emotionally, or psychologically, to anything that may endanger, abuse, degrade, or intimidate the person as a condition of association with a group or organization, regardless of the person's consent or lack of consent.

Given these definitions, much of what INS pledges experience clearly qualifies as hazing. Steam Bath, HP Night, and the daily recitation of pert (at tables) are obvious examples.

A former PE used the phrase, "responsible hazing" (which he admitted was an oxymoron) to describe what happens during the INS pledgeship. "We do haze . . . I hope we always do it." The PE elaborated on what this oxymoron means to him: "We yell at them from a class standpoint, not individually." With some exceptions (most notably HP Night), most of the hazing is psychological, not physical. "We don't make them do pushups; this is harder because it's mental," the PE explained.

And as a recent initiate recalled, "As soon as you realize that its mental and they're not going to physically touch you, you're fine." The ability to discount, or deny, the seriousness of the abusive behavior in which they engage characterizes life in INS.

The PE acknowledged that people on the outside don't understand it. "The whole goal is to break you down during pledgeship and then to build you back up and by the end you have an appreciation for it." He likened pledgeship at INS to Marine Corps basic training. "I know what it creates. I don't know why [the process has this result]." What results, apparently, is a unified pledge class. The INS PE continued explaining:

> There's a respect for everybody in the pledge class; all are equal in the hazing environment and all rely on each other and respect each other. We do this because it works. Holding hands and reciting Bible verses wouldn't work. . .
>
> Obviously anytime you want to indoctrinate anyone, you restrict their food, restrict their sleep, get them run down and then really emotionally play with them. . . How else would I get a group of guys and assimilate them into the house? There really is no other way to, in ten weeks, take 27 guys, a group of strangers. . .cocky, good athletes, intelligent. . .and make them into INSs. This is the way it had to be done.

After studying fraternity hell weeks, Walker (in Nuwer, 1990) observed that the group solidarity resulting from fraternity hazing was analogous to military boot camp (as do INS respondents). Walker cited an anonymous source to make the point:

> It is out of the agonies of training that [the infantrymen] develop pride in having done what they believe many of their former friends could not have done and which they themselves never thought they could do (Nuwer, 1990, p. 115).

Walker claims that "rites of passage often include unpleasantries and ordeals, both physical and mental" and must not be

> mistaken for negative sanctions. . .(for example) paddling during an informal initiation is not necessarily done for the enjoyment of the harasser, nor is it necessarily used as a punishment for misbehavior; sometimes it is a test of loyalty and self control, and sometimes it is used simply to increase the stress (Nuwer, 1990, pp. 115-116).

The military is not the only group that still hazes for the purpose of self-reconstruction. Consider this report of a recent Shriner induction.

> Michael G. Vaughn, 44, of Lexington, KY, filed a lawsuit against the Shriners, claiming that the secret initiation rite humiliated and hurt him. He said that at one point during the ceremony, he was blindfolded and told to lie on a table and pull down his boxer shorts, then his bare buttocks were given a jolt of electricity with a stick wired to a 12-volt motorcycle battery. Attorneys defending the Oleika Shrine Temple said that they would bring witnesses who would testify that the ritual was not painful, but fun ("First witness," 1992).

INS members espoused a fundamental belief in their process. How else could they accomplish their goals? "If you didn't have all those rules, if you didn't learn all that information, if you didn't have somebody yelling at you, you wouldn't see all those trophies in that case, you wouldn't see us bringing home grades." Apparently, the end justifies the means.

INS is a brotherhood proud of its achievements. It traditionally places high in pledge class and all-house grades and in intramural competition. Its members are active in leadership positions on campus. Many brothers attributed their personal achievements and those of the house to the pledgeship program. Moreover, they believe that the experience prepares them well for their life beyond college.

> Your coping skills are improved in a process like this because you learn how people do things. . . [It] makes you a stronger person. . .you're not timid at all. You know better how to deal with things, day to day. Things don't get to me that once would.

That INS members would have such a view is not surprising. The behavioral outcomes of hazing have been examined extensively:

> An initiate who endures a severe ordeal is likely to find membership in a group all the more appealing. . .the commonplace behavioral theory of cognitive dissonance can explain why initiates put up with so much from hazers. The cognitive aspects of the pledges--specifically how they perceive themselves fitting into the world they live in--need to be satisfied regularly. If not, frustration and stress--dissonance--occur. Once the initiates envision themselves in

> the Greek world. . .they feel dissonance if they believe something might deprive them of the opportunity to be part of the group. Hence, they do what they must do, accept what they must accept, to gain entrance. The initiates believe the group to which they aspire has value. Therefore, what the members ask them to do cannot be so unreasonable. Besides, didn't the members all go through it? (Nuwer, 1990, p. 115).

"Going through it" is more important than first meets the eye. In fact, there seems to be something universal about enduring physical hardship and psychological abuse during the process of coming of age, to earning the right to be recognized as a "full member." In Western culture it is known as "becoming a man."

Rites of Passage

> I think this masculinity thing is an important issue and needs to be addressed. . . People must see what it really means--especially with regard to drinking and drinking to excess... Young men are being asked to prove they're men, and the way to prove yourself a man in this society is by blind compliance--by drinking to excess and doing things perceived as very masculine types of things. (Sigal in Nuwer, 1990, p. 49)

Keen (1991, p. 28) observes that "the cycle of human life suggests that there are at least four major rites of passage for every person: birth, coming of age, marriage, and death." According to Van Gennep (1960):

> The life of any individual in any society is a series of passages from one age to another and from one occupation to another... Transitions from group to group and from one social situation to the other are looked on as implicit in the very act of existence, so that a man's life come to be made up of a succession of stages with similar ends and similar beginnings (pp. 2-3.)

There are, of course, many different rites, rituals and ceremonies across cultures that mark the transition from boyhood to manhood. Keen (1991) identified three phases or "acts" that seem to be common to most cultures that practice rites of passage, "from the bar mitzvah of Jewish people to the subincision of the penis among the Australian aboriginals" (p. 28). These three acts are: Act I--Separation (what van Gennep calls preliminal rites); Act II--Transition (liminal, or threshold, rites); and Act III--Incorporation (postliminal rites) (van Gennep, 1960). These three "acts" can be used to

analyze the people-processing function (rush and pledgeship) of fraternities. In fact, Leemon (1972) employed van Gennep's (1960) rites of passage framework to examine pledgeship in a fraternity in the 1960s.

All new members of an organization undergo a transition period, becoming acquainted with the traditions and customs of their group. So, too, it is with the fraternity pledgeship. Similar to Leemon's study, the separation phase in our fraternities was marked:

> by the beginning of a change in the pledges' social relations. This change was marked by increased rates of interaction in a new system, decreased rates of interaction in some other systems in which the pledges had been interacting, and the acquisition of new status . . . (Leemon, 1972, p. 48).

During the separation stage, pledges were forced to break with previous social structures. In Iota Nu Sigma, the separation phase commenced with Rush Weekend and was in full force by Rookie Week. By that time, INS pledges had been separated from virtually all that was familiar to them--parents, high school chums, hometown, girlfriend (if they had one)--and had taken up residence at a fraternity house where most pledges did not know the others living there. Pledges were "strangers in a strange land" which perfectly suited the people-processing purposes of INS--a period of values indoctrination as new members learn the values and skills necessary for survival in the group. The potential for education or indoctrination is considerable as chapter members are in a position to instill virtually any set of values.

According to Leemon (1972), the transition phase is differentiated from the separation phase by the introduction of unique structures and processes as well as a "pattern of rhythmic intensification of interaction--a pattern that developed in this phase relatively free of influence originating outside the fraternity" (Leemon, 1972, p. 53). Few INS members would opt for Leemon's prose ("rhythmic intensification of interaction") in describing this break. Most would more likely describe it as "shit hitting the fan"; Steam Bath was it. When the shift to the transition stage occurs, newcomers begin to accept the practices of the new group. A common

outlook emerges, enhanced by cohesion among peers. The pledge's reference group are the actives who model behavior free from adult influence. Thus, newcomers are most susceptible during this time.

The transition phase in INS lasted about ten weeks, not the months or years common to tribal societies, but long enough nevertheless to indoctrinate pledges with the group's norms and expectations. In tribal societies, a boy is "apprenticed to men who teach. . .him" the obligations of manhood, including "spiritual technology (ritual, chants, dances, ceremonies, healing practices); practical technology (use of tools, hunting, gathering, growing); and social skills (the art of husbanding, fathering, and fighting)" (Keen, 1991, p. 31). The spiritual technology, practical technology, and social skills needed in the fraternity world are somewhat different, but counterparts can be found in the INS Pledge Education Program. For example, spiritual technology is represented by such aspects of fraternity life as the INS Luau, Dad's Night, and the recitation of pert. Elements of practical technology are found in the routines of study tables, tables at meal times, and calls and cleans. Social skills were learned through such activities as greeting every member by name, answering the phone in the approved manner, and perhaps even the treatment of women, as evidenced in the Pledge Party.

The incorporation phase, with its rituals and ceremonies that express the new status of newcomers, signals full acceptance into the group (Leemon, 1972). By accepting a new group member, the fraternity signifies that the socialization process is complete and the individual holds values similar to those of other members. Most commonly in fraternity life this phase is marked by the formal ceremony of initiation. INS has such a formal initiation ceremony, though little was shared about this most secret rite. As such, it is a "black hole" in our knowledge of INS socialization.

Pledgeship in INS and other fraternal orders is analogous to the rites of passage used by more primitive societies. It ushers youth "through sequential stages to an unequivocal manhood" (Gilmore, 1990, p. 124). These rites "dramatize" (Young, 1965) the transition from boy to man,

replete with rituals and emblems. The climax is the public conferral of adult status, the equivalent of manhood.

The Way to Manhood

Some argue that socialization as practiced by INS and other fraternities is unnecessary, abnormal, unhealthy, and potentially lethal (Nuwer, 1990). Given the circumstances surrounding fraternity incidents resulting in injury and loss of life, such a position is understandable. Yet in cultures as diverse as tribal societies, the Marine Corps, the Shriners, and INS, such initiation practices seem "normal"; certainly they are necessary if newcomers are to "come together" quickly, learn the ways of the group, and perpetuate the group's culture.

American males, for the most part, manage to grow up without the formalized "rites of passage" that are evident in tribal societies. Adolescent brawlers on the Truk Islands in Micronesia, Mehinaku wrestlers, and Spanish macho-men (Gilmore, 1990) must find their way to manhood "without clear signposts" (p. 123). Growing up in these cultures is a process of trial and error, with only vague guidelines prescribed by some "cultural script" (Gilmore, 1990, p. 123). In INS, a similar phenomenon was observed, although the path to manhood was known to the actives (particularly the Pledge Education Committee) but unknown to the pledges. Why is it that INS is permitted to engage in such behavior?

After studying the role of rites of passage in American culture, Gilmore (1990) concluded that our society offers a confusing array of options to men "at every stage of life, creating problems of diffuseness and ambiguity. . . that men must resolve in their own way to reach their culture's goal" (p. 124). That is, because our culture does not define what manhood means, American males must structure their own "makeshift masculinity" (Raphael, 1988), determining for themselves what constitutes the state of manhood.

In Raphael's (1988) view, fraternities "reconstruct the vitality and authenticity of a tribal band" (p. 79); the purpose of these tribal facsimiles is to provide validation for one another's manhood. Thus, the fraternity

provides a "masculine niche" in a culture in which the construct of "manhood" is fairly amorphous. Raphael suggests that fraternities:

> offer a true initiation in its classical form, where the power of the tribe is paramount and personal growth is carefully engineered. . . As with the primitives, these modern-day novitiates must deny and transcend their prior and separate identities before they are allowed to join the tribe" (p. 90)

In the case of INS, the group assaults the egos of its pledges until they acquiesce.

Checking The Findings

In order to check the accuracy of our interpretations, we asked key respondents at each of the four houses to read earlier drafts of our findings. One Gamma Gamma Sigma member responded:

> Maybe there is a reason for fraternities not being viewed in a very positive way. But I tend to think it's really kind of a victim of media bashing, or isolated group of people that they can focus problems on. I do not believe that fraternity members are the only people that have alcohol problems. I don't believe that fraternity members are the only ones engaged in sexual misconduct, or sexual harassment or date rape. . . Fraternities are not the only organizations that exhibit racial problems or racism. . .
>
> When you start making your conclusions, [I feel like] that you start grouping all four of the chapters together. I didn't get the idea that our fraternity was portrayed in the manner that it accurately is--I'm not asking you to write a positive thing on fraternities--I'm saying write something that is accurate, at least accurate for us.

To which, another fraternity member added:

> These fraternities present a dichotomous population. They're not all the same. And make that really clear. We feel--and your judgment is going to be different because your perspective is different--that we do handle alcohol responsibly. We feel that [another group] doesn't, obviously. We think it's a different world, from where we're coming from. So when you make generalizations and put us in the same group, we don't think it's fair.

This last member's comments, particularly about the generalizability of our findings, are well taken. Indeed, readers must determine the degree

to which our observations and interpretations are transferable to settings and groups with which they are familiar. In so doing, it is important to keep in mind Geertz' (1973, p. 29) admonition:

> Cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete. And, worse than that, the more deeply it goes the less complete it is. It is a strange science whose most telling assertions are its most tremulously based, in which to get somewhere in the matter at hand is to intensify the suspicion, both your own and that of others, that you are not quite getting it right.

And so we are like the Cree hunter who went to Montreal (the story goes) to testify as to how his way of life would be disrupted by the new James Bay hydroelectric scheme. When administered the oath, he said: "I'm not sure I can tell the truth...I can only tell what I know" (Clifford & Marcus, 1986, p. 8).

In the final chapter, we draw our conclusions from these findings and offer recommendations for those committed to bringing about cultural change in mens' fraternities.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

Fraternity cultures are much richer and more complicated than they have been portrayed in this monograph. However, in order to better understand the role of alcohol in Greek life, we maintained a narrow focus, one that required we concentrate on certain activities, some of which were prohibited by state law, national fraternity offices, and the institutions that host these groups. Up to this point, it may appear that fraternities offer little of value, either to their members or to higher education. However, other information about the fraternity experience suggests this conclusion is wrong.

In the first section of this chapter we review some of the documented benefits of fraternity membership to make a case for the cultural reform of these groups rather than their abolishment. Then we offer conclusions and recommendations based on the results of this study.

Benefits of Fraternity Membership

According to Malaney (1990), fraternities provide opportunities for leadership experience in addition to those available through other organizations sponsored by the institution. Providing these opportunities is particularly important on large university campuses where the competition for organizational leadership positions can be unusually keen. The Greek system has made good on its promise of being a fertile training ground for leaders. More than 50 fraternity men have served as United States Supreme Court Justices. Fifteen have been president of the United States, including John Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, and George Bush. Other alumni include entertainers (e.g., Bob Hope, Candice Bergan, Dionne Warwick, Joanne Woodward), heads of Fortune 500 companies (e.g., Sam Walton), and other prominent individuals such as Willie Mandella, Lou Gehrig, and William Faulkner.

The quality of the living environment in a fraternity house (e.g., food, accommodations) often is perceived by members to be superior to that available elsewhere on campus (Malaney, 1990). Fraternities provide their

members with opportunities to associate with others with similar interests, to come into contact with successful alumni who can assist in a future career, and to refine social and interpersonal skills in the company of supportive peers (Hughes, Becker & Geer, 1962). The group also is a vehicle which facilitates participation in institutional governance, community service, philanthropic causes, and other valued activities.

The bonding of member-to-member and member-to-institution that occurs through the fraternity experience results in such positive outcomes as increased self-confidence and assertiveness, satisfaction with college, and educational attainment (Astin, 1975; Carney, 1980; Iffert, 1957; Johnson, 1972; McKaig, 1983; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Astin (1985) found that fraternity membership increased the chances for graduating between six and nine percent. While such an increase may not seem like much, when translated into tuition revenues, an increase in student retention of this magnitude is an appreciable financial advantage for any campus.

Fraternities members typically are quite loyal to their alma mater as evidenced by higher levels of giving in response to annual fund solicitations (Nelson, 1984). At one institution in the midwest, Greeks contributed 56% of the funds raised in a solicitation campaign even though they made up less than 30% of the contributors (Griffith & Miller, 1981).

It is clear from this brief summary that fraternities offer many attractive benefits, both to those who join and to the institutions that host them. At the same time, it is not possible to ignore the shadow side of fraternity culture, particularly those properties of group life that promote hazardous use of alcohol and hazing and perpetuate harmful stereotypes of women, members of historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, and gays, lesbians, and bisexuals. The results of this study suggest that at least some, and perhaps many, fraternities need systemic cultural reform to become minimally congruent with the educational aims of their institution and to more consistently attain the noble goals to which they aspire.

Conclusions

Based on this study of the role of alcohol in fraternity culture, five conclusions are warranted.

Conclusion 1: *Alcohol use in fraternities is a cultural phenomenon; therefore, to understand and influence the role of alcohol in fraternity life, cultural perspectives and approaches are needed.*

Alcohol is a dominant artifact in fraternity culture. The vast majority of private rooms and most public spaces in the four fraternity houses in this study were replete with symbols and vestiges of alcohol. Alcohol was used freely by both legal age and underage members at social functions. The exception to this norm was on certain occasions during pledgeship when pledges were prohibited by actives from drinking. The language and stories of fraternity life were peppered with references to alcohol. When the supply of alcohol was exhausted, social events as group activities typically ended.

Knowing the historical conditions out of which the fraternity movement was born (Chapter 4, Appendix B) provides some insight into the constellation of attitudes, values, and assumptions of fraternities that support alcohol use. These cultural properties form the core of the "college man" subculture described by Horowitz (1987) which is characterized by hedonism, rebellion, and anti-intellectualism. Because of these properties, it is understandable why external interventions to modify the role of alcohol in fraternity life have not been very effective. Viewed culturally, "fraternity members drink," and frameworks for understanding this behavior and for bringing about change must address systematically the cultural properties of fraternities that support alcohol consumption.

Conclusion #2: *Alcohol and hazing are key elements in a complicated system of rewards and sanctions used by fraternities in socializing newcomers to group norms and values.*

On occasion, rituals and traditions established to honor the original goals of an organization evolve over time into forms which serve purposes very different from those intended (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). The fraternities in

this study used alcohol and hazing to produce the custodial orientation that results in conformity, cohesiveness, and loyalty to the group over the institution. In Chapter 4, we described how alcohol is featured in this system of rewards and sanctions during rush and pledgeship, and how the status differential between upperclass students (actives) and newcomers (pledges) was reinforced through hazing and regulating pledges' access to alcohol.

Prohibiting alcohol during many rush and pledgeship activities serves purposes in addition to the appearance of complying with dry rush mandated by national headquarters or the institution. The prospect of dry rush makes the forbidden but long desired fruit (alcohol) seem even sweeter on those occasions (e.g., The Weekends, Pledge Party, Luau) when the actives--appearing magnanimous in the eyes of pledges--provide pledges with alcohol. So it is a sad irony is that as institutions and national fraternity officers emphasize the importance of dry pledgeship, they inadvertently have inflated the influence of alcohol in the socialization of newcomers.

No one in any of these groups viewed drinking as a healthy activity or denied that their alcohol use and hazing were violations of civil law and institutional and national fraternity policy. The vast majority seemed to accept the proposition that alcohol and hazing were necessary means to desired ends (e.g., brotherhood). When viewed from a cross-cultural perspective, the combination of alcohol and hazing used in fraternities bears a striking resemblance to how young men in some other cultures are socialized. As we pointed out in Chapter 4, physical and mental testing are common components of rites of passage into "manhood" in other societies. Perhaps one of the reasons the contemporary college fraternity is so popular at present among many undergraduates is that such groups more clearly define for the American college male what it means "to be a man."

Conclusion #3. *The role of alcohol in fraternity culture is independent of institutional size and control as well as the perceptions of institutional agents about group responsibility.*

While an institution's context surely influences fraternity life in many ways, our judgment is that the role of alcohol in group life would be not be much different no matter at what type of college or university the fraternities in this study were located. This is not to say that the cultures of these four groups did not differ one from another; they did, in myriad ways. But alcohol was an integral element in group life for all these fraternities. For example, the dominant role that alcohol played in socializing newcomers was similar across the groups. Moreover, the role of alcohol in the cultures of the two groups perceived as having made progress in complying with institutional and national fraternity expectations was similar to those groups that had not made progress.

What seemed to differentiate the groups was their learned ability to "play the game" as one respondent described it in Chapter 3. That is, these groups differed in that two of them have been able to create the impression that they had made progress in moving away from irresponsible, hazardous use of alcohol by focusing the attention of institutional agents away from alcohol to their members' involvements in other areas, such as philanthropy, intramurals, and student government.

Conclusion #4: *National fraternity staff and institutional agents presently lack the requisite knowledge and skills to undertake cultural change in local chapters.*

Cultures require varying degrees of conforming behavior by their members to maintain themselves. Cultures also lend stability to relations that develop over time between groups. This includes the expectations for roles and relationships that exist between local chapters, national fraternity headquarters, and institutional agents (e.g., deans of students). These relationships make it very difficult to bring about the kind of cultural renewal needed to diminish significantly the role of alcohol in fraternity life. In order to understand these relationships, and more importantly, to discover the cultural aspects of fraternities that foster hazardous use of alcohol and other behaviors inconsistent with an institution's educational purposes (e.g., hazing), people who work with fraternities must become

acquainted with literature and practices compatible with cultural perspectives.

For example, the American Council on Education (1989) established guidelines for institutional action that are compatible with the recommendations proposed here in that they are designed, in part, to ameliorate the excessive use of alcohol in fraternities. However, recommendations similar to these have been put forth in the past without the desired effect. If the role of alcohol in group life is to be modified, the entire set of the ACE guidelines must be interpreted and implemented using a cultural frame of reference.

Fraternity culture is difficult to change not only because changes are often imposed by outsiders, but because the essence of the group--its historical *raison d'etre*--is to perpetuate itself in its current form. The track record of advisory boards consisting of faculty and local Greek alumni in positively influencing fraternity culture is modest. We suggest this is because members of such boards are usually "insiders," integrally tied to the culture; they are survivors whose personal assumptions and values have been shaped by the group.

Conclusion #5. *Key actors in modifying the role of alcohol in fraternity culture are local chapter members.*

National and institutional policies and directives can be helpful in mobilizing interest in and support for changing behavior in fraternities. But the cultural frame suggests that such interventions will not bring about lasting behavioral change. It is the individual chapter house which--through its people-processing mechanisms--teaches its members what they can (and cannot) do under various circumstances. Therefore, it is the only level of intervention that can make a difference. For this reason, cultivating the commitment of chapter members, particularly formal and informal leaders, to change their culture is the only intervention that promises to be effective.

Recommendations

Cultural change, particularly attempts to change the culture of a group in specific ways, is far from an exact science. Some believe the complicated, deeply rooted, mostly tacit, and mutual shaping qualities of culture make it impossible to intentionally modify (e.g., Kuh & Whitt, 1988). Others are more hopeful (Kilmann et al., 1985; Schein, 1985). Our position is that culture is difficult to intentionally change. In many respects, systematic efforts to change a fraternity's culture are unclear, untested technologies. With these caveats in mind, the following recommendations are offered.

Recommendation 1: People committed to inducing cultural change in fraternities must become familiar with cultural perspectives.

To view and understand fraternities as cultures, one must become a student of culture. This will require some reading, discussion, and practice in observing and identifying the properties of organizational culture briefly described in various places in this monograph (e.g., Chapters 1 and 4). National fraternities should begin to immediately provide workshops and other professional development opportunities for their office staff and field secretaries to become acquainted with cultural perspectives. At the same time, student affairs professionals must become cultural practitioners and learn about cultural perspectives and change strategies. Becoming familiar with the following readings would be a good start: Frost et al. (1985), Frost et al. (1991), Kuh (1990), Kuh and Whitt (1988), Lundberg (1990), and Tierney (1988, 1990).

Recommendation #2: Conduct cultural audits of local chapters using teams of insiders and outsiders.

Hazardous use of alcohol, hazing, and other behaviors antithetical with the purposes of higher education are products of a group's culture. Therefore, it is essential that institutional agents (e.g., student affairs staff, faculty advisors), national fraternity staff, alumni advisors, and house corporation members discover and understand the culture of their house and its influence on member behavior. A primary purpose of an audit is to

understand how these organizations use alcohol in teaching newcomers the norms and values of the organization. A key element in conducting cultural audits is to involve professionals with expertise in the appropriate methods who are not members of the organization (e.g., fraternity) under study. Approaches to conducting cultural audits have been described by Fetterman (1990), Kuh (in press a), Kuh et al. (1991), Kuh and Whitt (1988), and Whitt (in press).

Recommendation #3: Adapt culture-change strategies and tactics to the special circumstances and exigencies of college fraternities.

It is beyond the scope of this monograph to discuss strategies for cultural change. Those interested in learning more about approaches to intentionally modify culture will be interested in the work of Dyer (1986), Woodman and Pasmore (1991), Manning and Eaton (in press), Kilmann et al. (1985), and Wilkins (1989).

Seven general approaches have been somewhat successful in changing or modifying organizational cultures. They are: (a) creating new units or organizations; (b) changing significantly the characteristics of members; (c) using a visionary or interpretive leadership style; (d) redefining the mission and strategy of the organization; (e) using conflict in creative ways to identify dominant cultural artifacts and to highlight differences between espoused and enacted group values; and (f) using cataclysmic events and conditions to refocus the organization's goals and priorities (Peterson, et al., 1986). Each of these can be adapted and applied to inducing cultural change in fraternities. To illustrate, an example of (a) above is a college which encourages and supports other residential organizations (e.g., wellness theme houses) to compete with social fraternities. An example of (f) is an institution whose president and trustees ban fraternities because of their anti-intellectual philosophies and activities (Seitzinger, 1989). Some combination of these tactics may be appropriate when designing initiatives to modify the role of alcohol in fraternities. Of course, the context in which the groups are found (region of the country, type of institution, unique cultural properties of the

organization in the institution, and so on) are factors that need to be taken into account.

Some of the cultural properties (e.g., symbols, rituals) that groups with strong cultures such as fraternities use to inculcate attitudes and values also can be employed to systematically reshape the group's culture. For example, a group willing to dismantle its pledgeship program could hold a ceremony to declare its commitment to cultural change. The ceremony would be most powerful if it were a public event to which members of other groups, fraternity executives, alumni, and institutional agents are invited. The featured event of the ceremony could be the burning of all written pledge education materials.

Changing the language of the group is also important. For example, most fraternities refer to new members as pledges, which implies an oath. Referring to newcomers as "novices" or "associate members" signifies the beginning of assimilation into the chapter. Changing the language also increases the chances that vestiges of certain hazing practices associated with pledgeship are more likely to disappear.

Recommendation #4: Hold members of the local chapter responsible for bringing about cultural change.

Educational programs related to drug and alcohol use delivered by outsiders (e.g., fraternity field secretaries, student affairs staff) have been relatively ineffective in reducing alcohol consumption among fraternity members as well as other college students. While educational efforts are important, the key to ameliorating excessive use of alcohol in fraternities is to change the conditions under which members are brought into the group. A compact is needed between the institution and the individual local chapter to change fraternity culture.

It may seem odd that we suggest putting the fox in charge of the hen house (i.e., asking the chapter, for example, to enforce its own hazing policies). It is difficult to imagine a group of new PEs at INS changing the process on their own, or even advocating for such changes. Yet there is no other way that such changes can be realized without eliminating the group.

Without local ownership and commitment, attempts at cultural renewal will fall short as they have in the past.

No uniform strategy will work at every local chapter. That is, while some chapters may enjoy success in diminishing the influence of alcohol in socialization practices because of the presence of live-in chapter advisor (e.g., graduate student--see Recommendation #7), for others the presence of such a person will be insignificant. In some units, active involvement by the house corporation will be a key, particularly if corporation members understand the complicated ways in which alcohol is used in pledgeship.

Recommendation 5: Defer rush until the final month of the first year of college or the second year.

The major arguments related to deferred rush are well known. Those in favor suggest that deferring rush for, say, at least a semester, will allow traditional-age male students time to develop other friendships and become integrated academically and socially into the larger college community (Ellis, 1989; Wilder & Hoyt, 1986). They also need time and space to develop autonomy and identify their own values, not be required to adopt those of a social organization. In short, students should have a year to become their own person before they are indoctrinated to the values of a fraternity (Jakobsen, 1986; Letchworth, 1969). In addition, alcohol becomes somewhat less of a novelty after students have been at college for six months or so. Thus, the influence of alcohol during rush and pledgeship will be reduced, thereby forcing fraternities to be more creative in appealing to potential members, rather than relying on taboo libations as an attraction.

National fraternities argue that deferred rush will have a negative financial impact on the group. If first-year students do not move directly into the chapter house, empty beds will result; this would require a stricter live-in policy for current upperclass members. Deferring rush for almost a year obviously precludes fraternities from inviting high school seniors to consider joining their group. So, in the case of INS, contacts with alumni inviting them to nominate prospective members would not occur until after

students have completed at least one semester in a good standing at the institution. In addition to initial financial challenges to the fraternity when first-year students are no longer eligible to live in the house, deferred rush creates problems at an institution that relies on the fraternity system to provide housing for large numbers of undergraduate students.

However, after the transition from current practice to deferred rush, the absence of large numbers of young students (and their propensity toward impulse expression common to late adolescence) may foster a change in the environment of fraternity houses, a change which may make the atmosphere and ethos of the house more attractive to more mature upperclass members. Thus, more seniors may choose to live in the house instead of move off campus, thus reducing the financial risk associated with deferred rush.

Recommendation 6: Redouble efforts to recruit new members from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.

This is not a new idea. In 1947, the fraternity chapters of Bowdoin College began to take in at least one foreign student each year (Johnson, 1972). Fifteen years ago, Owen and Owen (1976) observed that fraternity chapters were "trying to broaden the composition of their membership and to ensure that no person will be unfairly excluded" (p. 12). The arguments for opening membership to a more heterogeneous population are consistent with Greek ideals and will--over time--change the nature of the group. Recruitment strategies must be developed which appeal to people from different racial and ethnic groups as well as students from countries other than the United States. This means that fraternities cannot do business as usual; they must change some of their practices. When groups attempt to recruit new members from historically underrepresented groups, these students often reject bids from fraternities because they find the practices and expectations of the fraternity to be incompatible with their own values and backgrounds. If fraternities change their recruitment practices enough to be perceived by people from different cultural backgrounds as welcoming and hospitable, the stranglehold of accepted patterns of behavior and beliefs

which often contribute to hazardous use of alcohol will have a better chance of being broken.

As important as this step is in changing the culture of fraternities, we are not confident that in the short term this strategy will have the desired effect in many groups. Recall from Chapter 2 that "diversity" to fraternity members usually does not include cultural and ethnic differences. This is because one of the more appealing features of group membership is to be with people from similar backgrounds who have similar interests (Newcomb, 1962).

Recommendation # 7: Select live-in advisors based on their understanding of and commitment to the institution's mission and to bring about cultural change in their group.

Every chapter house should have a live-in advisor. Traditionally, the primary responsibilities of a chapter advisor have been four-fold: (a) to monitor the academic performance of members; (b) to assist members in developing appropriate study habits; (c) to maintain a chapter house environment conducive to study and intellectual purposes; and (d) to refer members to appropriate campus agencies such as academic skills laboratories or library services. To effect cultural change, these expectations must be expanded to include a focus on working with chapter members to develop a commitment to understanding and addressing elements of their group's culture that conflict with the espoused purposes of their group.

Advisors need not be alumni of the chapter. Indeed, in many instances it may be preferable to have someone unfamiliar with the group's traditions and rituals. However, this individual must be allowed to observe all events and activities. Also, it is important that any outsiders invited to assist a group in discovering and modifying its culture have access to any and all formal and informal group activities including rush and initiation. Over time, it may be possible for institutional agents to nurture this cadre of advisors into a network of cultural practitioners on the campus who,

through reinforcing the ideals of fraternity, contribute to improving the campus learning climate for all.

Recommendation # 8: The cultures of some groups may be impossible to modify; in such instances, eliminating the group may be the only recourse.

One of the most difficult cultural assumptions to address in fraternities is the reason these groups were created. Recall that social fraternities began as outposts of rebellion, places apart from the institution where male students could do whatever they wished. The practices of many of these groups continue to be antithetical to their institution's educational purposes. When this view accurately describes the ethos of a fraternal organization, implementing policies and practices developed by external organizations is a mere exercise in the illusion of control and authority. Nothing short of cataclysmic conditions will force such to modify their behavior (e.g., the distinct possibility that the house will fold).

Also, the excessive use of alcohol as an element in new member socialization may be so deeply embedded in the psyche of some groups that nothing short of eliminating the group will have the desired impact. Granted, it is not unusual for such groups after they have been "formally" dissolved to take up residence off campus in private houses. In such instances, local chapter alumni and house corporation members must do everything possible to distance themselves from their former group.

A Final Note

> . . .it is useful to ask what the form and meanings of drink in a particular group tell us about their entire society. In a complex modern society, made up of many subgroups, the drinking patterns of each subgroup or class may reflect its special characteristics as well as the cultural frame of the whole society. (Mandelbaum, 1965, p. 281)

Fraternities are products not only of their cultures, but also of the institutional and societal attitudes and values that allow them to persist in their present form. So while fraternities warrant all the attention institutional agents can provide, other characteristics of college campuses

must be considered when determining how to respond to fraternities that continue to promote hazardous use of alcohol by their members (Kuh, in press b). Institutions must hold fraternities to the same standards as other groups on campus.

In the final analysis, it is disappointing that colleges and universities continue to tolerate subcultures that inculcate in their members hedonistic and anti-intellectual attitudes and behavior. Fraternities are not the only examples of such groups. Similar, though less well organized, actions are exhibited by athletes and other groups of undergraduates. The greatest disappointment is that fraternities, and those that support them, have not taken action to address the cultural contexts of these groups so that the behavior of fraternity members is closer to the goals espoused by the fraternity.

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Appendix A

Notes on Research Methods and Methodology

The orientation of the bulk of the research on college students, including studies of Greek life, has been positivistic (Pascarella, 1991), utilizing such quantitative approaches as surveys and questionnaires. An exception to this conventional practice, however, was Thomas Leemon's (1972) study of fraternity pledgeship. Leemon lived and ate in a fraternity house, and observed the entire process of pledgeship during the spring, 1963, semester at a college "in the Middle Atlantic section of the United States" (Leemon, 1972, p. vii).

Given the purpose of this study (i.e., to discover and understand the cultural elements of fraternity life related to alcohol use), an interpretive approach was considered superior. Interpretive work typically utilizes qualitative methods, i.e., collecting data in the form of words. Such methods are especially useful for identifying setting-specific values, assumptions, expectations, and behavior (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984) and are well-suited for capturing the "fine-grained complexities" of life (Pascarella, 1991, p. 463). In qualitative studies (Schofield & Anderson, 1984): (a) the inquiry takes place in "natural settings" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985); (b) the researcher is the primary data collection instrument; (c) "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) is the goal (i.e., data are reported which illuminate everyday patterns of action and meaning from the perspectives of those being studied); (d) social processes are emphasized over outcomes; (e) multiple data-gathering methods are used; and (f) data analysis is inductive in that key concepts are extracted from the detailed database of particularistic information.

Data Collection

In order to increase the likelihood of encountering a spectrum of cultural properties and practices with respect to fraternities and alcohol use, we asked student affairs administrators at the two participating institutions described in Chapter 2 to identify chapters on their campus that met one of two criteria with respect to alcohol: (a) exhibited generally "responsible" behavior--or "were making progress toward" responsible behavior, or (b) exhibited generally "problematic" behavior (e.g., a history of alcohol-related offenses that resulted in probationary status imposed by the institution). After identifying the chapters, the executive directors of the national offices of the fraternities mentioned were contacted to inform them of the nature of the proposed study and to enlist their support. Every fraternity executive reached responded positively, though they all emphasized that the decision about whether to participate rested with the individual chapters. Chapter presidents were then approached to discuss participation in the study. In all, seven chapters were recommended by campus administrators and subsequently contacted; six of these groups invited us to make a

presentation to chapter members to explain the aims and intent of this study. Four fraternities eventually permitted access, with one so-called "responsible" and one "problematic" group at each institution ultimately becoming involved.

Individual interviews and focus groups were the primary means of data collection. All interviews were audio-taped with respondents' permission. For the initial interviews and focus groups, information was compiled on Interview Summary Forms (Miles & Huberman, 1984) in order to identify themes and questions that were generated. In subsequent interviews and reviews of tapes, detailed notes were recorded on 5x8 index cards.

Another important source of information was observations of formal and informal parties and other events. In all, seven formal events were observed, including a portion of spring rush at the INS chapter. Most of the records for these experiences were kept during the event on 3x5 index cards, with subsequent impressions dictated into a tape recorder immediately following an event. In addition, documents were collected and analyzed, such as fraternity files, student and local newspapers, and student codes of conduct. A comprehensive, daily field journal was maintained to record additional impressions of the field experience and to speculate about emerging themes and interpretations.

Because it was not possible to interview all the actives and pledges of all four fraternities, status-sampling was initially used; that is, interviews were first conducted with chapter officers, then other actives, then some pledges. Student affairs staff involved with the Greek system at each campus were also interviewed. A variant of snowball sampling (Crowson, 1987) was employed to expand the participant pool by asking respondents, at the conclusion of each interview, to identify other members whose experiences within the fraternity chapter were similar and different from their own. For the case study of INS socialization, groups of recent initiates were interviewed to explore this aspect of their experiences in depth. Because of the focus on INS, we spent more time with this group than any of the others.

Fraternity members were generally very cooperative in furnishing information regarding their perceptions of alcohol use in their groups, despite the fact that this, for the most part, is illegal behavior for them. Even though the interviews were scheduled for only one hour in length, rapport with members did not appear to be an obstacle in data collection.

Data Analysis

Data collection and data analysis were conducted concurrently in order to inform collection and interpretation of additional data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985); that is, the interview summaries, observation summaries,

some field journal entries, and tape-recorded field notes included elements of analysis and interpretation. The importance of socialization to member use of alcohol became evident, for example, from careful examination of the "mountain" of data obtained in our conversations and observations. Analysis consisted of "immersion" in the data set by reviewing all written materials --with particular emphasis on the Interview Summary Forms and other interview notes. These documents provided a guide to those interviews that were the richest in description of socialization and other cultural properties associated with alcohol and alcohol-related behavior. Transcripts were developed from the interviews that appeared most appropriate for constructing a "thick description" (Geertz, 1973; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of the socialization process employed in each of the four fraternities studied, particularly INS.

Debriefing sessions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) were conducted with several groups of respondents. Also, earlier iterations of this report were shared with some key respondents in order to check the credibility and trustworthiness of out findings (Chapter 4). While members took issue with some of our interpretations, they agreed that, in essence, the description of their group was accurate.

Appendix B

A Brief History of College Fraternities

Social fraternities in higher education originated in the United States. Their popularity and many of their cultural manifestations cannot be fully appreciated without understanding the historical events and circumstances out of which they were born and shaped their development. This brief treatment is not a definitive historical record of the fraternity. Many histories of American higher education consider the social fraternity (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976; Horowitz, 1987; Rudolph, 1990). Other writers focus exclusively on the evolution of the fraternity movement (Owen & Owen, 1976). Our purpose here is to draw attention to aspects of the history of these organizations that explain the presence of certain cultural properties in contemporary fraternities, especially as these properties are associated with attitudes and behavior that influence alcohol use.

European Influences

During the middle ages, guilds of craftsmen were created out of their concerns for regulating the quality of their products and services as well as to provide mutual protection. The preferred way to learn a craft was to apprentice under the tutelage of experienced professionals (Kershner, 1989). By the 18th century in England, some of these guilds evolved into semi-secret societies which, in addition to providing protection for their members, also met member's needs for social affiliation (Egan, 1985). In Germany, such groups as dueling clubs appeared, with purposes similar to those of the guilds in England (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976).

In the United States, the European craft guild took the form of the Social and Benevolent Order of Free Masonry. Within a half century, chapters of the Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, and other groups appeared. All of these organizations espoused humanistic ideals, seeking to provide men of common purpose with opportunities to join together (Krahling & Mullinix, 1985).

The Emergence of Societies in Higher Education

Both the curriculum and out-of-class life in institutions of higher education in the 18th and 19th centuries were rigid, structured, and dogmatic, allowing for very little in the way of student autonomy and social interaction. So just as adults acted on a need to form secret societies--complete with initiation rights and symbols--students of the 18th century created a variety of literary and debating societies in the absence of organized social activities (Bryan & Schwartz, 1983; Johnson, 1972; Robson, 1976). In Europe, they were student philosophic clubs; their purpose was to discuss current political issues (Egan, 1985). At Harvard, student-run clubs had a religious orientation, although such groups did not last long. In 1750,

students at the College of William and Mary formed the Flat Hat Club in order to provide for fellowship and fun to counter the oppressive academic atmosphere (Chapman, 1954). Because secret societies were banned by the English crown, the group had no choice but to keep secret its constitution, rituals, and symbols to protect its members (Egan, 1985). Similar kinds of groups soon appeared on other campuses, many of which were faculty-controlled clubs which engaged in academic discussion, campus politics, and oratorical competition (Krahling & Mullinix, 1985).

Out of this background, the first Greek-letter college fraternity, Phi Beta Kappa, was established in 1776 as a secret society at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. Espousing values of friendship and brotherhood, Phi Beta Kappa invoked the Deity at each meeting (Egan, 1985), used peer judgment to determine membership, and established branch chapters at other institutions such as Harvard, Yale and Dartmouth (Johnson, 1972). While the group's founding purpose was to discuss moral, philosophical, and intellectual issues free from faculty interference (Johnson, 1972), it was--for the first 50 years--a social group.

Phi Beta Kappa did not become a scholastic honor society as it is known today until after the anti-secret society movement of the 1820s. Nevertheless, Phi Beta Kappa provided the model for fraternities in the 20th century: a Greek-letter name, a Greek motto, an oath of secrecy, a badge, ritual, a seal, and a secret grip or handshake.

Influenced by tenets of Jeffersonian democracy, secret societies were criticized as elite and undemocratic because they were thought to inculcate values incompatible with those of the college, criticisms that persist today (Horowitz, 1987; Kuh & Lyons, 1990). Several states, including Indiana and Mississippi, attempted to ban these groups (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976; Johnson, 1972). Nevertheless, by the end of the 18th century, fraternities had displaced literary societies as the organization of choice on college campuses. The fraternity offered relief from days filled with prayer and a curriculum centered on memorization of ancient languages and ideas. To their credit, those groups that sponsored debates of current events filled a void in the curriculum.

The Emergence of the Social Fraternity

As colleges became more accessible to the increasing numbers of students with more diverse social, academic and economic goals, colleges shifted from a religious to a secular orientation. Students, however, continued to chafe at faculty control and the literary nature of existing secret societies. Leadership training and facility with social interaction were becoming more important. Because fraternities satisfied these needs (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976; Johnson, 1972; Rudolph, 1990), fraternity membership became a mark of desirability, selectivity, and prestige (Hawes,

1929). Thus, the birth of the social fraternity at Union College in 1825 was inevitable.

The role and influence of fraternities on campus life expanded in the middle of the 19th century with the introduction of fraternity houses. The first house, built in 1854 near, not on, the University of Michigan campus, was a meeting room. However, fraternities soon thereafter established residences at several eastern colleges (Johnson, 1972; Owen & Owen, 1976), an idea which migrated quickly to the middle west (Hattendorf, Illuzzi, Hughes & O'Boyle, 1988). With this innovation, fraternities gradually evolved from groups that met together to groups that lived together. This altered the entire concept of fraternity, offering advantages and disadvantages to prospective members and the group. The fraternity house is believed to have strengthened unity, discipline, activities and friendships as is evidenced by the fact that, today, a significant majority of fraternities live in their own houses, either leased or owned.

Newly established colleges welcomed fraternities as their own resources were stretched attempting to obtain books and equipment, erect academic buildings, and hire professors. In the early years the number of books in fraternity libraries often was greater than the college's collection (Johnson, 1972; Owen & Owen, 1976). Fraternity houses saved colleges millions of dollars in building costs and ostensibly provided a collective learning place (Hawes, 1929). David Starr Jordan, the first president of Stanford University, invited fraternities to colonize on the Stanford campus when the institution opened for just this purpose: to provide housing for students that the university was unable to construct with its own resources. Thus, fraternities were attractive organizations because they provided room and board, thus allieviating a major campus problem (Beach, 1973).

Although fraternities offered relief from certain problems facing colleges (e.g., student housing), from their inception, faculty and administrators debated the desirableness of such organizations at an institution of higher education (Rudolph, 1990). More will be said shortly about the rivalry among groups to attract members that led to excesses in rushing practices, and to charges of exclusiveness and snobbery.

By the 1880s, the intellectual vitality associated with the early forms of fraternity had all but disappeared. Their distinctiveness was drawn from the prestige they acquired by being the most exclusive social organizations on campus. Nevertheless, from 1895 to 1920, the number of fraternity chapters tripled because universities could not provide enough housing to meet student demand.

According to Horowitz (1987), the "college man" student culture, which is rooted in the male fraternity, has dominated undergraduate life since the late 19th century, particularly at many residential colleges. Members of the college man culture (and, by definition, the fraternity) are

characterized by an anti-intellectual orientation, an emphasis on social interaction, hedonistic behavior, and accepting attitudes toward alcohol and drug use. "Embedded within the fraternity system is the implicit understanding that faculty and students are at war, and, therefore, that higher education is not a process of discovery, but a series of battles to be won. [Fraternities have] devalued academic and intellectual attainment" (Horowitz, 1987, p. 291).

This should not be surprising for as Rudolph (1990) observed, fraternities were "intended to fill an emotional and social rather than a curricular vacuum" (p. 146) by bringing together young men into small groups that would provide for the needs felt by removal from family and home community. By providing "an escape from the monotony, dreariness, and unpleasantness of the college regimen," these groups unwittingly institutionalized certain anti-intellectual attitudes and behaviors (Horowitz, 1987): "drinking, smoking, card playing, singing, and seducing" (Rudolph, 1990, p. 147). Fraternal organizations, it should be noted, did not invent such activities, but they did firmly implant such pastimes into the collegiate lifestyle (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976).

The Origins of Pledgeship

As with secret societies, the concept of liminal membership in an organization also has European roots. In the 15th century, European students practiced a system of pennalism, whereby upper-class students used extortion and physical abuse to prepare newcomers to be in the company of educated men (Kershner, 1989; Nuwer, 1990). In the 1700s, upperclass students in British schools had a freshman "fag," or servant, assigned to run errands (Egan, 1985; Rudolph, 1990). The fagging system served as a rite of passage; freshmen were indoctrinated into the traditions of the college and taught the rules of the university community.

More brutal rituals replaced college fagging. Organized "rushes"--institutionally sanctioned class competitions between sophomore and first-year students--emerged as acceptable ways to reinforce academic class status. Freshman laws emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as an alternative way to initiate newcomers. Other popular conventions included wearing beanies or signs, not speaking unless spoken to, and observing curfew (Egan, 1985).

In the early years of fraternities, membership was limited to seniors. As the number of chapters increased, so did competition for the best men on campus. Soon, first semester juniors, then sophomores, were invited to join. When Delta Kappa Epsilon (DEKE) was created, they started to rush first year students, which created even more competition. In order to keep potential members from becoming interested in other chapters, fraternities started initiating their members immediately. They also encouraged their

new members to wear their fraternity colors or ribbons to identify themselves as men already spoken for (Kershner, 1989).

By the 1850s, fraternity men in small midwestern colleges were rushing pre-college men, known as "preps." Each prep was asked to sign a pledge that they would join their group when they came to college. The time between signing the pledge and their initiation into membership became known as a pledge period which further increased the competitiveness of rush. Although many national fraternities banned the immediate initiation of "preps," fraternities continue to rush men before they entered college, as was the case with two of the groups in this study.

Fraternities existed for over 100 years without pledgeship; the first pledge period was not formed until 1886. Prior to that time new members were elected into full membership, not pledged (Jones & Gidney, 1951; Kershner, 1989). Chapters observed a prospective member throughout the year until members felt comfortable inviting the student to affiliate; once the promise to join, or pledge, was made, initiation into the fraternity was immediate (Krahling & Mullinix, 1985).

Some fraternities, however, were disappointed with their members' lack of knowledge about the group and began to withhold rights of full membership until newcomers were judged "worthy of wearing the badge." The popularity of withholding initiation grew and fraternities responded by creating physical markers of novice status. For example, Phi Delta Theta approved the design for a novice pin in 1893, Alpha Tau Omega in 1896, and Phi Kappa Psi in 1897 (Jones & Gidney, 1951; Kershner, 1989; Krahling & Mullinix, 1985). As class rebellions subsided on most campuses, fraternity association programs developed into rites designed to test the pledge's character. Thus, hazing--both physical and psychological--became a staple in the induction of newcomers.

Summary

Since their founding, fraternities and institutions of higher education have had an uneasy, sometimes contentious relationship. At various points in time, fraternities have enjoyed considerable popularity and influence on college campuses. For example, in the 1920s and 1950s, when the political atmosphere on campuses was relatively quiet, the Greek system flourished. In the 1930s and 1960s, however, the popularity of the Greek system was at a low ebb. The economic depression and the civil unrest, changing political attitudes, and the Vietnam war were far more important to most students than joining a fraternity (Petersen, Altbach, Skinner & Trainor, 1976).

Over the years, grievances against fraternities have stemmed from their discriminatory practices, hedonistic orientation, and--more recently--irresponsible behavior with regard to alcohol. After World War II, some faculty and administrators argued, unsuccessfully, that groups that

restricted membership based on race, color or creed had no place on campus. As private organizations, fraternities have retained the right to select their own members. Charges such as these, accentuated by the climate prevailing on campuses in the 1960s, led to a fairly steep decline in fraternity membership. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibiting sex discrimination in the schools was amended in 1974 to exempt membership practices of social groups. Nevertheless, many campuses demanded that the discriminatory practices of fraternities be abolished if they were allowed to remain in existence. Although such restrictions have now been eliminated, membership selection remains the prerogative of the individual chapters.

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